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ABSTRACT

This report on young adolescents 10 to 15 years old, who are on their own from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. discusses after-school programs, barriers to providing a broader array of programs, and strategies for decision making about after-school opportunities for latchkey children. Explored are the nature and extent of the problem, its multiple causes and facets, current program and policy trends, and the wisdom of alternative initiatives. Chapter 1 explores the latchkey issue in terms of the impact of changes in families and work, the number of unsupervised young adolescents and young adolescents participating in organized activities, the extent to which self-care causes harm, what parents want, barriers to using available services, and the population needing services. Chapter 2 offers a brief history and overview of after-school programs for young adolescents, and a discussion of program outcomes related to skills acquisition, delinquency prevention, youth employment, and academic achievement. Chapter 3 presents a topographical map of federal policies, state and federal legislative initiatives, licensing regulations, tax incentives, and guidelines for determining child neglect. After a sampler of recommended public policy changes in Chapter 4, Chapter 5 analyzes public policy alternatives, including maintaining the status quo, supporting comprehensive child care and youth development programs, supporting public awareness campaigns and community service programs, and providing a transportation subsidy and start-up funds at the state level. (RH)

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After School:

Joan S. Lipsitz

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AFTER SCHOOL: YOUNG ADOLESCENTS ON THEIR OWN

Joan Lipsitz

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Contents

Preface v

Introduction 1

Chapter 1. The 3:00 to 6:00 P.M. Issue 5

What Is the Impact of Changes in Families and Work?. . . . 5

How Many Young Adolescents Are on Their Own?. 6

How Many Young Adolescents Participate in Organized Activities? 9

Is Self-Care Causing Harm? 11

Yes, Harm Is Being Done 12

No, Harm Is Not Being Done. 14

Is Harm Being Done? It Depends. 15

Is Harm Being Done? Restate the Question. 16

What Do Parents Want?. 18

What Are the Barriers to Using Available Services?. 21

Who Should Be Served?. 24

Chapter 2. Community-Based After-School Programs for Young Adolescents 31

A Brief History of After-School Programs. 31

An Overview of After-School Programs for Young Adolescents 35

Goals 36

Models 37

Funding and Costs 42

Program Outcomes 44

Skills Acquisition 46

Delinquency Prevention 47

Youth Employment 49

Academic Achievement 50

Chapter 3. A Topographical Map of Public-Sector Policies 53

Federal Policies 54

State and Federal Legislative Initiatives 58

Licensing Regulations 61

Tax Incentives 62

Guidelines for Determining Child Neglect 63

Chapter 4. A Sampler of Recommended Public Policy Changes . 65

Chapter 5. Analysis of Public Policy Alternatives 69

Valuative Criteria. 69

Policy Alternatives 70

Maintain the Status Quo 70

Support Comprehensive Programs for Child Care and Youth Development 72

Support Public Awareness Campaigns 73

Provide Start-Up Funds at the State Level 74

Provide a Transportation Subsidy. 74

Support Community Service Programs 75

Support School Dropout Prevention and Pre-Employment Programs 75

Conclusions 76

References. 79

PREFACE

After School: Young Adolescents on Their Own is the result of eighteen months' work mapping programs available to young adolescents in the after-school hours, identifying the barriers to providing a broader array of programs for the age group, and examining alternative strategies for decision making about after-school opportunities for 10- to 15-year-olds. I have attempted to give the 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. block of time a shape and meaning in its own right; to set forth the importance of looking at the age group in this block of time; and to give youth-serving agencies, foundations, and policymakers information and criteria for initiating, continuing, or increasing their after-school efforts.

While this report addresses latchkey children who are young adolescents, it also takes a broader view of the so-called "latchkey problem." Because of the developmental characteristics of all young adolescents, their after-school needs should be addressed irrespective of the working hours or economic status of their parents. Thus, while *After School* presents a compendium of information about changes in family structure and the labor force and looks at risk factors inherent in young adolescents' isolation from adults, it also presents an overview of after-school programs and pertinent policies that pertain to all young adolescents.

Two themes weave their way through this report. First, many people are worried about the harm that is being done to children and youths who are unsupervised for numerous hours weekly. This worry is eclipsing the equally important concern that opportunities for enrichment during critical developmental years are being lost during the "dead time" after school. Second, no assertion about the status of young adolescents from 3:00 to 6:00 can be supported unequivocably by research data. That is, we do not know how many young adolescents are on their own after school, how many are being served by after-school programs in their communities, what the outcomes are of attending such programs, or what the risks are of being in self-care. I have attempted to present the available data dispassionately, in the hope that this overview will trigger research as well as improved policy setting and service provision.

In this quest, I have been helped by many people whose names appear in the text. Several people, however, worked behind the scenes to support and inform my work. Susan Wisely, my program officer and colleague at the Lilly Endowment, started and sustained the effort with vision, trust, and enthusiasm. At the Center for Early Adolescence, Sue Rosenzweig gathered all the background documents I requested, pursued many I never would have thought to request, and gave unstintingly of her remarkable energies to provide the most extraordinary library of "support services" I have ever enjoyed. Without Wisely and Rosenzweig, there would be no report.

Two colleagues at the University of North Carolina read and critiqued manuscript drafts. One of the pleasures of university life is the time and thoughtfulness colleagues give without recompense. I can offer only my thanks to Ron Haskins and Duncan MacRae, Jr., who bear no responsibility for the failings of this report and considerable responsibility for its strengths.

After School is but one of several approaches the Center for Early Adolescence is taking to the 3:00 to 6:00 issue. The Center has worked in teams to identify

outstanding after-school programs, to convene youth workers and policymakers in order to examine the status of programs and policies, to develop training for youth workers and parents, and to advocate on behalf of increased and improved after-school programs for young adolescents. The work of Leah Lefstein and Gayle Dorman has been the cornerstone of this multidimensional effort. Their work enriched this report, just as they enriched my life while I was working on it.

-- Joan Lipsitz

Introduction

A growing number of young adolescents, often referred to as "latchkey children," are on their own in the after-school hours. While it is possible to trace aspects of the so-called "latchkey" problem throughout history, the current phenomenon is recent and not so firmly embedded in the American grain as to be resistant to open-minded discussion and creative problem solving. We are not yet witnessing the trench warfare that characterizes many other major social issues. The debate about latchkey children is young.* Major decisions are yet to come. We can explore the issues that cause and might alleviate the latchkey problem in a timely and optimistic manner.

Dramatic changes in families, the labor force, and the economy are changing the context in which young people are growing up. The divorce rate and the number of children living in single-parent families have soared. Mothers, both single and married, have entered the labor force in unprecedented numbers. At the same time median family income, when measured in constant dollars, has declined while federal and, in some cases, state support to the nonprofit sector has been reduced. Budget constraints at the state and local levels have led to cutbacks in such traditional forms of public support for after-school resources as libraries, parks, recreational facilities, and extracurricular school activities. The private sector has been unable to replace the loss of public dollars. These complex and interrelated phenomena have led to serious issues of child-rearing that beg for resolution.

Concern for the well-being of infants and toddlers may well explode in the 1990s, the first decade when the majority of married women with children under age 6 will be in the labor force. In addition, the population of children under age 10 in single-parent households will rise 48 percent in the 1980s, from 6 million to close to 9 million children, and the trend toward increased labor force participation by single mothers will continue. (U.S. Congressional Budget Office, 1984)

Although we understand the causes of the latchkey problem, we know little about the effects of prolonged self-care on 10- to 15-year-olds. Moreover, we know little about the effects of various after-school programs--whether they reduce harm to or by young adolescents, or whether they improve their emotional and intellectual well-being. We know least about the possible effects of current public policy initiatives being recommended, ignored, or implemented. Nevertheless, latchkey children are a source of worry for a large and growing percentage of our population, as witness legislative initiatives to establish school-age child-care programs, hotlines and survival skills handbooks developed for pre- and young adolescents, and a constant barrage of newspaper and magazine articles that admonish parents about safety measures they should adopt for their unattended children.

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*Webster's *New Collegiate Dictionary* first defined "latchkey child" in the 1983 edition as "a young child of working parents who must spend part of the day at home unsupervised."

It is the misfortune of the early adolescent age group that professionals and policymakers have no choice but to pit one age group against another in a competition for the limited resources of time, energy, creativity, and money. In this competition, the junior high-aged population loses out until it becomes a demonstrable threat to society. That is, public attention, usually in the form of social control measures, swiftly turns to adolescents when rates of antisocial behavior rise. Alcohol and drug abuse, violent crime, truancy, and prostitution evoke anxiety about the well-being of youth and their elders in levels of intensity adequate to propel policymakers into action.

Before we are in a crisis demanding measures of social control and before demographics force us to make unfortunate choices among children based on age, we can seize the moment to examine dispassionately the status of young adolescents who are on their own after school.

Because 10- to 15-year-olds are both children and adolescents, their well-being in the after-school hours is both a child-care and a youth development issue. As a child-care issue, the status of young adolescents is often considered intractable by service providers and policymakers: what does child care mean for an increasingly independent group of youngsters whose diverse interests and preferences cannot be ignored? As a youth development issue, attention to young adolescents draws upon a long history of youth work in settlement houses and voluntary youth organizations, but traditional youth development programs have less public visibility than child care and can be ignored more easily. Youth development for young adolescents in the after-school hours provokes little controversy and is "owned" by no one, as best summarized by Elliott Medrich and his colleagues:

> Some scholars contend that adolescence was invented early in this century to account for the increased number of years during which young people were considered reproductive and in need of supervision and training. The after-school hours are a similar kind of invention. This block of time has become distinct, ironically, through its ambiguity. It is a negotiable zone that is not wholly education, work, or freeplay. (Medrich, Roizen, Rubin, & Buckley, 1982, p. 6)

This paper interweaves child-care and youth development perspectives in order to shed light on the latchkey issue as it affects young adolescents in the hours after school from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. It seeks to explore the nature and extent of the problem, its multiple causes and facets, current program and policy trends, and the wisdom of alternative initiatives. This is, from the outset, a frustrating exploration. The data are not available to state with assurance the number of young people affected, the effects of being alone, the outcomes of interventions, or the financial and social costs of the status quo relative to alternative policies. It is not possible to live up to the reasonable standards ordinarily used in policy analysis: that is, "focused statement of the problem to be analyzed, methodical evaluation of existing research, reasoned consideration of options, and presentation of supporting evidence and argumentation for well-specified proposals" (Peterson, 1983, p. 2).

At best, what follows is an introductory exploration of the 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. issue as it concerns young adolescents. In the end, the argument for alternative policies will revolve in large part around values rather than numbers and around the quality of life we wish for that age group. The debate will lead to questions about who takes responsibility for enriching the present lives of young adolescents so they may enrich their own futures, and what level of public commitment we wish to make. It will provoke us to ask whether and how we can have greater numbers of young people in whom we recognize the characteristics of health cited by Werner and Smith (1982) in their study of resilient children and youth: young people who work well, play well, love well, and expect well.

Chapter 1

The 3:00 to 6:00 P.M. Issue

What is the Impact of Changes in Families and Work?

Several dramatic changes are occurring simultaneously in patterns of marriage, living arrangements, and labor force participation. These changes raise questions about the vulnerability of the early adolescent age group.

Because of the falling birth rate, the number of children in the United States declined in the 1970s; at the same time, the number living in one-parent families increased. By now, the statistics have become familiar. In 1982, 22 percent of all children under 18, or 14 million children, were living in single-parent families (U.S. House Select Committee on Children, Youth, and Families, 1983). Nationwide data from the 1981 Census Bureau sampling indicate that from 1970 to 1980 the number of one-parent families headed by women rose 356 percent, up from 234,000 to more than 1,000,000; the number of families headed by divorced women rose 181 percent, from 956,000 to 2,700,000 ("Homes Headed," 1982). Glick (1981) estimates that 50 percent of children born in the 1970s will experience some time in a single-parent family before their eighteenth birthday. And within the context of one-parent families, as Glick points out, the most rapid rate of increase has occurred among children who are at least 10 years old. From 1970 to 1980 the increase among pre-nursery-age children (under age 3) was 36 percent; among 10- to 17-year-olds, it was 50 percent.

From these statistics a picture emerges of young adolescents who are growing up with decreasing access to adults. Not only is a second parent in the home becoming less common, but, as Galambos and Garbarino (1983) point out, an additional adult (other than a parent) in the home is also a rarity. The trend toward age-segregated housing has further reduced the availability of adults in the neighborhood, depleting the social environment of young people. To compound the age segregation of young people, "The diminished role of the small town and urban neighborhood in American life, as well as the emergence of modern urban environments, has resulted in social isolation, with fewer adults taking on responsibility for other people's children" (Galambos & Garbarino, 1983, p. 3). The disappearance of the front porch in American architecture is a telling symbol of the absence of the watchful eye that adults once kept on neighborhood youths. The front porch has been replaced by the back deck of suburbia, a tribute to the good--and private--life. In some cities, more people live in the anonymous cubicles of high-rise apartment buildings, their names and even faces unknown to one another, than once lived in an entire neighborhood.

In increasing numbers, the adults of the household are not home when their early adolescent children get out of school. If, as Glick (1981) says, the greatest increase in single-parent families has occurred for children who are 10 years old and older, these are also the children whose mothers are likely to be working full time. For instance, a record 19.5 million women with children under age 18 were working or looking for work in March 1984. Among these women, divorced mothers with school-age children had the highest labor force participation rate of

all women. (U.S. Department of Labor, 1984, *News*) Because single-parent families have much lower incomes than dual-earner families, single mothers are likely to be unable to afford after-school supervision. Thus, children from single-parent homes are those least likely to be supervised at home in the after-school hours.

The problem of parental supervision is not solely a single-parent worry. From 1980 to 1981, 7 out of every 10 net additions to the labor force were female (1.2 million). Many of these women were married. In 1981 there were 25 percent more dual-earner, married couple families than in 1971. (U.S. Department of Labor, 1981, *Annual Summary*) The average labor force participation rate for single-parent mothers with 6- to 17-year-old children was 78 percent in 1980 (Glick, 1981); the comparable figure for married mothers with children in the same age group, husband present, rose from 49.2 percent in 1970 to 61.7 percent in 1980, and is projected to reach 70.1 percent by 1990 (U.S. Congressional Budget Office, 1984). As a member of the Junior League of Salt Lake City said in testimony before the U.S. House Select Committee on Children, Youth, and Families, "One of the problems now is that all the Junior League volunteers are now working mothers. We are no longer home baking cookies for our children and our neighbors' children" (Mitzi Dunford, cited in U.S. House Select Committee on Children, Youth, and Families, 1984a, p. 92).

While women work primarily for economic reasons, these figures also represent changed values. In 1938, only 25 percent of Americans approved of a married woman earning money if she had a husband capable of supporting her. In 1978, 75 percent approved. (Van Dyck & Hannah, 1981) If figures were available for 1984, the percentage would likely be higher still. Every study of women's participation in the labor force reports a strong upward momentum in women's employment: in the first quarter of 1984, for instance, the number of employed women reached 45,200,000, nearly 500,000 more than in the last quarter of 1983 (U.S. Department of Labor, 1984, First Quarter). We are in the midst of what some are calling the most significant change in the history of the American labor force (U.S. Department of Labor, 1981). As Kamerman and Kahn (1981) report:

> Women are working in growing numbers, and there is increasingly less difference between the labor market behavior of mothers, and that of all women, and between women and men. Moreover, responses to national surveys regarding women's attitudes toward work indicate that they, like men, view work as central to their identities and would continue to work even if they could live comfortably without earned income. (p. 25)

How Many Young Adolescents Are on Their Own?

How many parents rely on "self-care" for their early adolescent children in the after-school hours? We do not know the answer to this simple question. Nationwide data about child-care arrangements for pre- and young adolescents are not available. We simply do not know how many of these young people lack sustained, predictable contact with parents or other adults during their out-of-

school hours. We do not know how safe they are or how well supervised. October 1974 census data indicated that 17.7 percent of 7- to 13-year-olds whose mothers were employed full time took care of themselves (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1976). We can safely assume that, if we lopped off the younger children in these aggregated data, the percent of unsupervised older children would rise considerably. If we had current data, we might find that the number of children who are not supervised had soared, along with the burgeoning rate of single-parent families with adolescents, single mothers in the labor force, and dual-earner marriages. But we do not have data comparable to the October 1974 data. The Census Bureau, in effect, "lost" the supervision issue for a decade. The question about unattended children ages 7 to 13 was not updated for lack of funding (Martin O'Connell, Chief, Fertility Statistics Branch, U.S. Bureau of the Census, telephone conversation, October 13, 1983). (Questions about child care for children 14 and under, before and after school and in the evenings, were reinstated in the December 1984 *Supplement to the Current Population Survey*, published in 1986 after this report had been produced.)

Lacking nationwide census data, we have glimmers of data from more localized studies that should be interpreted with caution. For instance, California's Senate Office of Research found it difficult to estimate the size of the latchkey problem, because parents are hesitant to admit that their children are unattended, and because waiting lists and responses from service providers about "need" represent only the "tip of the iceberg" (Kersten, n.d.). In addition, studies often use aggregate age groups, like 6 or 7 to 13 or 14, which are neither parallel from one study to the next nor interpretable by specific age. Sometimes, the data are internally contradictory. For instance, parents may list themselves as the major caregivers of their children even when they are working full time, or they may say their children are in the care of "relatives" who are actually siblings barely older than the children in question (Seligson, Genser, Gannett, & Gray, 1983). The estimates from different studies thus vary considerably. Nonetheless, we can begin to put together a composite numerical picture of unattended young adolescents from a variety of sources.

The Greater Washington (D.C.) Research Center surveyed child-care arrangements of employees of the C&P Telephone Company, the Federal National Mortgage Association, and the Washington Gas Light Company. Thirty-four percent of the employees said their children looked after themselves. The average age of the children was 13.6; those in self-care lived primarily in two-adult households. (Emlen, 1982; Maxwell, 1982) A 1980 self-report survey of 709 youngsters, aged 6 to 14, 91 percent of whom have mothers working outside the home, was designed by Hyman Rodman for *Working Mother Magazine*. The survey found that half of the 9-year-olds, close to 70 percent of the 10-year-olds, 82 percent of the 11-year-olds, 76 percent of the 12-year-olds, and 96 percent of those aged 13 years and older take care of themselves after school. (Burtman, 1984) The United Way of Los Angeles (1984), which surveyed 7,000 central city workers at five major work sites, conducted one of the few careful studies to provide an age breakdown. Of the parents responding, 20 percent said they leave their children under age 14 without supervision after school. But according to the investigator, "an alarming finding was that 24 percent of children aged 7 to 9 and 76 percent aged 10 to 13 were left without supervised care for several hours every day" (p. 6).

A study conducted in 1980 in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, by the Charlotte Council for Children (1984) and the Social Planning Council of United Way found that, as in other studies, self-care depended on the child's grade level. Children in grades K-3 were less likely to be in self-care (13 percent) than were children in grades 4-6 (53 percent). While self-care was the most frequent arrangement for children in grades 4-9, sixth graders were inexplicably even more likely to be in self-care than other age groups.

In an intensive study of the time use of sixth graders (aged 11 and 12) in Oakland, California, conducted by Medrich, Roizen, Rubin, and Buckley (1982), no adult was at home to be with the child after school in 30 percent of one-parent and 23 percent of two-parent families. Fifty-one percent of these sixth graders said they often felt bored and did not know what to do after school. In households in which the mother was employed full time and had no children below the sixth-grade level living at home, no adult was at home after school in 56.5 percent of the cases. Among the sixth graders with younger siblings, 21 percent of the girls and 13 percent of the boys took care of their siblings on a regular basis at least four days each week.

From these studies, we can see that the numbers vary widely but the themes are the same: large numbers of school-age children are unattended after school. As the children grow older, they are more likely to be on their own or to be charged with responsibility for younger siblings.

What roles do parental employment, income, race, and geographic location play in these data? The findings are often contradictory.

The Charlotte study (Charlotte Council for Children, 1984) found no significant difference in rates of self-care based on full-time versus part-time parental work status. Unlike the Charlotte study, the Oakland study (Medrich et al., 1982) found a sharp rise (between 400 and 500 percent) in the percentage of households with no adult at home after school, based on whether the mother was employed part time or full time. The discrepancy between the two studies may be explained by the lack of comparable data, since Medrich studied only the households of sixth graders. The Charlotte study did not disaggregate the data to this extent. Medrich also found that in two-parent families where one parent was employed, 10.7 percent of the households had no adult at home after school, compared to 36.8 percent of two-parent households where both parents were employed and 45 percent of one-parent households where the single parent was employed.

While common sense would lead us to accept the Oakland data without question and generalize to all populations the findings that the more hours a mother works, the more likely her early adolescent child will be without adult supervision at home after school, other factors show the complexity of the issue. For instance, what role does income play in determining how children spend their time during the 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. time slot? A study conducted by Applied Management Sciences (March 1983) in Virginia and Minnesota found that in Virginia, families with incomes below the poverty cutoff were much more likely to have children in self-care than were those in other income brackets. In Minnesota, these findings did not pertain. On the other hand, self-care or sibling care were proportionately more common in suburban areas in both states.

Data from a citywide survey of New York City, conducted by Louis Harris and Associates (1982) for the Commonwealth Fund, contradict almost all the studies reviewed so far. First, investigators found that children who lived with one adult were less likely to be left on their own (16 percent) than were children who lived with more than one adult (24 percent). Second, an extremely high rate of 78 percent of families with children aged 6 to 12 reported that their children were never left unsupervised between the end of school and dinner. And, while adult supervision was common among all demographic groups, it was slightly *more* common among Hispanics (84 percent), poor families (82 percent), and AFDC recipients (89 percent). Children from white families were more likely to be left alone (28 percent) than children from black (23 percent) or Hispanic (15 percent) families. These figures are not disaggregated by age; they are also confounded not only by income but also by labor force status, neighborhood safety, and cultural norms. We cannot, then, answer questions about the role of income without taking these other factors into account.

This point is made abundantly clear by another study conducted by Applied Management Sciences (September 1983), this one in Montgomery County, Maryland, one of the wealthiest suburban areas in the United States. Data from questionnaires and personal interviews were collected in the spring and summer of 1983. The number of children in self-care (in this study, defined as being alone or with a sibling 10 hours or more per week) follows the usual pattern. Less than one-third of the county's 6- to 8-year-olds were in self-care, whereas over one-third of 9- to 11-year-olds and approximately three-quarters of 12- to 13-year-olds were in self-care, unattended by an adult (Millie Grant, Early Childhood Coordinator, Montgomery County Department of Family Resources, telephone conversation, October 18, 1983). As in the Oakland findings (Medrich et al., 1982), the use of self- and sibling care was substantially higher (42 percent vs. 21 percent) in households where all adults worked full time. The roles of race and income are of great interest, since they appear to corroborate the Louis Harris findings (1982). While self-care crossed all income levels, parents with the highest levels of educational attainment tended to rely more on self-care. So did white households. Nonwhite households were likely to use nonparental supervised care. Whether safety perceptions play an important role in the choices Montgomery County parents are making remains unexplored.

One last finding comes from the Greater Washington Research Center's survey of child-care arrangements of workers from three companies in Washington, D.C. The Center reported that self-care, the arrangement employed by 34 percent of the parents, was used primarily by households with two or more adults and incomes of $30,000 or higher. (Emlen, 1982; Maxwell, 1982)

How Many Young Adolescents Participate in Organized Activities?

At the time of the 1980 census, there were 21,756,000 10- to 15-year-olds in the United States. From the studies reported, a pattern emerges of an indeterminate but large number of young adolescents who are on their own in the after-school hours without parental or other adult care and supervision. On the

other hand, large numbers of young adolescents work; volunteer in their communities; go to the library; participate in extracurricular activities after school; take music, dance, and other types of public and private lessons; join recreation department athletic teams; and attend organized after-school programs.

It is impossible to estimate the percentage of young adolescents who come in contact with adults after school on a regularly scheduled basis, or how often they do so. In looking at municipal programs only, Medrich et al. (1982) report that "as much as $1.5 billion, or nearly 2 percent of municipal budgets, are allocated for after-school programs, services, and facilities today. It is estimated that several billion dollars more are comparably expended by private and quasi-public service agencies" (p. 159).

La Belle (1981) has studied "nonformal education," that is, organized, systematic teaching that provides a variety of learning opportunities outside the formal school system. He compiled figures indicating that in the service of nonformal education, community youth groups enroll approximately one-third of the eligible 46 million school-age children and youths in this country. The data came from the agencies themselves: the YMCA estimated that it served over 4.5 million youth in 1980; the YWCA, over half a million youngsters up to age 17 in 1978; Boys Clubs of America, 1.2 million young people in 1979; Girls Clubs of America, 220,000 girls in 1978; the Salvation Army, 450,000 children and teenagers in 1980. Boy Scouts of America reported a membership of almost 2.4 million in 1979; Camp Fire, Inc., indicated in 1978 that it had half a million members; and the 4-H Program enrolled over 4 million members in 1978. Kleinfeld and Shinkwin's (1982) figures vary somewhat from La Belle's, because they are slightly more age specific. For instance, "according to the national office of Boy Scouts of America, in 1980, Boy Scouts alone enrolled 1,064,993 11-13 year old boys" (p. 28). The national office of Girl Scouts of America estimated 1980 membership at 2,267,380 girls aged 6 to 17, or 11 percent of the age group.

As Kleinfeld and Shinkwin point out, however, the membership data indicate registration only, not necessarily participation. Also, these figures may well be inflated in a variety of ways (e.g., in counting units of services performed, clubs may count the same child several times). In addition, as La Belle (1981) observes, except for Boys Clubs and Girls Clubs, which serve large numbers of both minority and poor youths, the traditional youth organizations primarily benefit the white middle-class. "Of the youngsters served by the YMCA, for example, some 89 percent are white and predominantly middle class. For the Girl Scouts, 89 percent of their membership is also reported to be from nonethnic [white] backgrounds" (p. 324). Thus, the largest and best known community youth groups, excluding Boys Clubs and Girls Clubs, apparently leave large numbers of minority and impoverished white youths unserved.

The numbers are also misleading because attendance rates vary by organization, season, and activity. In some instances, as in the case of 4-H, it is not possible to participate on a daily basis. In others, as in the case of Girls Clubs and Boys Clubs, while the clubs are open almost daily, attendance rates vary widely. Moreover, in many families weekend attendance has no impact on the latchkey issue, and some activities meet only on weekends.

Finally, while the number of young people actually served by some programs may be inflated, other youth-serving programs record no numbers and publish no statistics. Thus, available figures omit attendance rates for community centers, church and synagogue youth groups, museum programs, and other after-school programs that serve young adolescents in their neighborhoods. (For a description of such programs, see Lefstein & Lipsitz, 1983.)

We can infer from the scanty figures available from municipal departments, churches, museums, community centers, and so forth, and from the inflated figures available from national youth organizations, that, even if all the registration and attendance data could be accepted without question, a substantial number of young adolescents would still be unsupervised and unengaged in enriching and productive after-school activities. Because the numbers are unreliable, there is no way to determine with certainty the availability of scheduled supervision for young adolescents in the after-school hours. We are left with various sets of head counts and a growing uneasiness about the number of young people alone at home, on the streets, and in shopping malls. We sense that we have a latchkey problem; we do not know how large it may actually be. Every informed guess says that it is increasing.

Is Self-Care Causing Harm?

Martin Rein (1976) argues that "the crucial issues in a policy debate are not so much matters of fact as questions of interpretation" (p. 12). As Garbarino (1983) says, "The numbers involved [in the latchkey issue] are large no matter how you look at it, but the difference involved in how you do look at it is significant." He asks, "Is a 13-year-old at home without a parent a latchkey child or simply a teenager home alone?" (p. 5)

Differences in "how you look at it" are at the heart of the debate about whether harm is being done to young adolescents who are in self-care after school. These differences emerged during a major conference held in Boston in May 1984, "When School's Out and Nobody's Home: The First National Conference on Latchkey Children." David Elkind, professor of child care at Tufts University and author of *The Hurried Child* (1981), stated at the conference that "we have to see latchkey children as what they are: children under stress." When challenged by another panel member for the source of his data, Elkind said his argument was based on "anecdotal and clinical work." Thomas and Lynette Long, authors of *The Handbook for Latchkey Children and Their Parents* (1983), described vividly the fears of present latchkey children and the lifetime legacy of fear and resentment of former latchkey children who are now adults. Hyman Rodman, professor of child development at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, and designer of the *Working Mother* survey (Burtman, 1984), countered by taking the Longs to task for using subjective methods and unmatched samples, and for failing to control for such critical variables as neighborhood safety and family stability. He reported on a study he conducted with matched pairs that controlled for important intervening variables. Finding no significant differences in self-esteem, locus of control, or personality and social difficulties, Rodman questioned whether we know enough about "self-care children" to conclude either that the latchkey phenomenon "contributes marginally, excessively, or not at all to developmental

problems." At the same conference, Massachusetts State Senator Chester Atkins observed, in reference to growing public concern, that "We are all on the beach watching a tidal wave coming in." (Quotations from author's notes)

If we are to avoid being swept away by rhetoric, we must base our "interpretations" on facts, as much as the state of research allows. Are young adolescents harmed by being left to their own devices in the after-school hours? The answers fall messily into four categories: yes, no, it depends, and a restatement of the question itself. The messiness results from the paucity and generally poor quality of the research about to be reviewed.

Yes, Harm Is Being Done

For the most part, assertions that self-care is causing harm are based on common sense rather than research. Claims are made that gaps in after-school services leave young adolescents prey to alcoholism, drug use, juvenile delinquency, pregnancy, and addiction to television. Beyond these specific threats to social and professional welfare, public worries center on threats to young people's emotional and physical safety. In other words, fears about the latchkey issue can be said to fall into two categories: the dangers that children fall prey to, and the dangers to communities that fall prey to their children. Garbarino (1980) refines these further into four risks associated with latchkey children: that they will feel bad, that they will act badly, that they will develop badly, and that they will be treated badly.

The major evidence that latchkey children "feel bad" comes from the research of Thomas and Lynette Long. The Longs (1981) argue that being left alone is emotionally dangerous to children and has lasting effects in adulthood. In one study of 53 children in grades 1-6 in an all-black, urban parochial school, the Longs found that more than 30 percent of the children left alone reported high levels of fear. In a subsequent study of 1,000 current and former latchkey children, the Longs (1983) found residues of fear, resentment toward parents, and increased social isolation among the (mostly minority) respondents. Because of the methodological problems referred to by Rodman and others, it is perhaps best to conclude that these findings indicate the potential for a heightened sense of personal jeopardy in certain circumstances. The nature of these circumstances must be explored further.

Arguments that young adolescents "will act badly" if left unsupervised by adults in the after-school hours are not substantiated by research, probably because the numerous independent variables are too difficult to control. In hearings held by the U.S. House Select Committee on Children, Youth, and Families, entitled "Families and Child Care: Improving the Options" (1984b), testimony was cited that in Oakland, California, 60 percent of intentionally set fires were lit by children, the vast majority between the close of the school day and the return home of parents. A 1977 report by the fire department in Detroit estimated that, of approximately 60 fires set each day, 10 occurred in houses where children were left unsupervised (Calhoun, 1984). Neither city could provide data disaggregated by age.

Studies that show a positive causal relationship between self-care and risk-taking behavior tend to focus on the role of maternal employment; they also tend to be seriously dated. Montemayor and Clayton (1983) note that "in a number of studies conducted mainly in the early 1960s (when more stigma was attached to maternal employment), a significant relationship was found between maternal employment and juvenile delinquency" (p. 115). Further investigation, however, contradicted these findings and led to the conclusion that the delinquency was actually related to maternal and/or family instability. Montemayor and Clayton also cite studies reporting that "without supervision or organized activities, adolescents turn to their peers who, on the one hand, provide emotional support and entertainment, but who also may encourage misconduct. Thus, it is not maternal employment per se which contributes to juvenile delinquency, but the context in which that employment takes place" (p. 116). (Medrich et al. [1982] comment that working mothers seem to spend as much time engaged in activities with their children as nonworking mothers: "Given the current debate about the consequences of maternal employment for children, it is particularly noteworthy that working mothers did not differ significantly from other mothers on these measures" [p. 130].) While the research is sparse and inconclusive, there appears to be some evidence that male children are somewhat more at risk for delinquency (Montemayor & Clayton, 1983). The risk, however, appears to be the result of lack of "supervision or organized activities" (p. 117), again under circumstances that need to be determined.

The most thorough review of sociological research on the family has been conducted by William J. Goode (1982), who asks, "What can we say about the effect of mothers' employment on the development of their children?" (p. 137). Goode reports that it has not been possible to demonstrate that children of working mothers develop psychological problems or are more prone to deviant behavior than children whose mothers stay at home. Small differences that do appear seem to pertain to class differences. That is, more juvenile delinquency and poor school performance are found among the lower middle or low social strata, where more mothers work, whether married or single. But, as Goode argues, the present reports cannot be an adequate basis for decisive conclusions, given changing assumptions and attitudes about appropriate sex roles within the home and in the marketplace. He states, "The most cautious but robust conclusion is this: If the mother's employment has a harmful effect on the psychological development of the child, contemporary studies have not discovered it" (p. 139).

Arguments abound that rates of pregnancy and substance abuse are rising because teenagers are unsupervised by adults. No research studies confirm this assertion. In fact, rates of substance abuse (and delinquency) have decreased and pregnancy rates have not increased, at the same time that the number of children left on their own has increased and at the same time that rates of sexual activity among teenagers have soared. Whether long-term harm is being done and will appear in statistics soon is open to conjecture. Common sense would indicate that we will see a rise in rates of destructive behavior as greater numbers of young adolescents are left on their own for longer periods of time. It is common sense that drives the assertion that adolescents "act badly" when left alone. The research does not, at this time, support this presumption.

In reference to the concern that latchkey children "will develop badly," we simply do not have research to support or deny this assertion. In fact, numerous

studies indicate that working parents devote as much time to child care as do nonworking parents. As Staines and Pleck (1983) say in understandable confusion, in their review of the impact of work schedules on families, "Consistency of evidence notwithstanding, it remains impressive but puzzling that workers do not allow long working hours to interfere with the amount of time they spend with their children or with their level of family adjustment" (p. 121). One explanation may be that a high number of working hours is associated with less time spent on housework. Perhaps a more provocative clue to the puzzling findings is the paucity of time parents spend with their children in general, especially as their children become adolescents. In any event, research cannot at this time direct our attention to specific developmental risks.

Unfortunately, there are indications that some of our fears that they "will be treated badly" can be substantiated. Garbarino (n.d.), in both his own research and the research of others, found a link between the latchkey phenomenon and physical, including sexual, abuse. Since studies of domestic violence and sexually victimized children report that siblings are more likely than parents to be perpetrators, Garbarino is not surprised by "the disturbing conclusion that the latchkey phenomenon exacerbates the problem" (pp. 11-12). Because no age breakdowns are reported, it is difficult to conclude from these studies what percentage of young adolescents are victims and what percentage are victimizers. Also, the findings must be interpreted with caution given the as yet unexamined role of intervening variables. Nonetheless, the risk that young adolescents will be involved in physical violence in the home is heightened by the absence of parental supervision.

One distressing caveat about parental supervision is in order. Evidence indicates that increases in unemployment lead to a heightened incidence of child abuse. Coolsen (1983) reports, for instance, that in states hardest hit by the 1982 recession, counties with high unemployment rates reported substantial increases in child abuse. He also cites a study conducted by Moncrieff Cochran and Urie Bronfenbrenner among auto workers in Flint, Michigan: when unemployment in Flint reached 20 percent, evidence of verified child abuse doubled. This connection between unemployment and child abuse was also uncovered in the late 1960s, when David Gil, studying violence against children, found that 59 percent of the fathers of abused children were unemployed either at the time of the violent incident or during the previous year (Coolsen, 1983). When parents are home in the after-school hours because of hard times, we may have little reason to take comfort in their presence. The fact that a parent is at home from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. is not necessarily beneficial to children.

No, Harm Is Not Being Done

Self-care does not necessarily result in harm. *Seventeen*, a magazine for young teenaged girls, has increased its monthly issue by five pages, to include three pages on meal preparation, because four out of five of its readers often do the family shopping. Several reviews of the literature conclude that latchkey children become more resourceful and self-reliant than their supervised peers, because they are more likely to be encouraged to assume responsibility for themselves and for selected household chores (Stroman & Duff, 1982). Gold and Andres (1978) found

that teenaged children of working mothers are less apt to think stereotypically about sex roles than are children of mothers who do not work.

Medrich et al. (1982) reported finding no systematic differences in Oakland children's participation in organized activities between those with an adult at home and those with no adult at home after school. As Medrich said at the May 1984 conference, "When School's Out and Nobody's Home," "I don't find a persuasive argument that latchkey children have significantly different lives than nonlatchkey children" (quotation from author's notes). Galambos and Garbarino (1983) found that fifth and seventh grade latchkey children in a rural school district were neither more fearful of being alone nor suffering academically compared with their nonlatchkey peers.

Is Harm Being Done? It Depends

The latchkey issue is complex, interweaving personal maturity, family structure, neighborhood safety, and community resources. Thus, we should expect research about its effects on young people to become more equivocal, not less, as the many intervening variables are taken into account.

For instance, while the Oakland survey (Medrich et al., 1982) did not find that unsupervised children used their "discretionary time" notably differently from their more supervised peers, it did observe that maternal employment was associated with a somewhat higher level of television viewing in black families. This level probably can be attributed, in part, to the fears of employed black mothers about neighborhood safety. Among those who "worried a lot," 74 percent were likely to have the television set on in their homes during the afternoon, compared with 54 percent of those who worried "not very much." Rubin (1983), one of the investigators in Oakland, states: "In families in which safety was a major worry, the children were more often encouraged, if not ordered, to stay indoors when they were not in the company of someone older. Thus the influence of maternal work patterns in children's television viewing was mediated by an extrafamilial factor--neighborhood safety--that varied widely across the city" (p. 113).

Likewise, the resources in a city will vary from neighborhood to neighborhood, one offering accessible playgrounds, libraries, and museums, and another offering few such resources. Whether harm is done, then, becomes an issue of what Medrich et al. (1982) call "neighborhood-level inequalities," which "may be especially important to children since they spend most of their out-of-school time relatively close to home" (p. 8).

After reviewing various studies on the effects of self-care, Galambos and Garbarino (1983) emphasized the importance of the community context: "In a rural area that is relatively crime-free, latchkey children are not any more or less socially and academically adjusted and fearful than children who are regularly supervised by an adult. . . . In contrast, negative experiences for latchkey children have been demonstrated in inner-city areas. Thus, there appear to be community differences with respect to a latchkey child's response to a situation" (p. 40). In addition, "no social event affects all children or youth equally and in the same way. Nearly all experiences are filtered by the quality and character of the

family. Some children will thrive on the opportunity of being a latchkey child, others will just manage to cope, and still others will be harmed" (p. 40).

Besides neighborhood and family, the maturity of the particular young adolescent is a critical factor in parents' determination of whether they have a latchkey child or a teenager at home alone. Early adolescent emotional and social development is so variable that decisions made appropriately for one child may be wholly inappropriate or even dangerous for another of the same chronological age. Researchers have not explored the possible relationships between personal maturity and self-care, nor the resulting developmental costs and benefits to young adolescents and their families.

Is Harm Being Done? Restate the Question

"Is harm being done?" is and must remain the most urgent question. It obscures, however, its important converse, "Are opportunities being lost?" Early adolescence is a pivotal time in life. While events during these years are in large measure determined by what has happened before, they also help determine much of what follows. The developmental tasks of early adolescence are not isolated phenomena. They are, rather, part of a continuum of growth, and thus crucial to personal and social health (see, e.g., Erikson, 1968; Hill, 1980; Lipsitz, 1977, 1980).

One of these developmental tasks involves exploring personal uniqueness and relatedness to others, that is, one's individuality. A paradox of adolescence is that this sense of individuality is achieved only when one sees oneself in terms of a larger social context. Identity is grounded in a world of others (Lipsitz, 1980). Adolescents depend on others to offer them a positive, realistic image of themselves that they can integrate into their own inner image. They need from adults consistent, positive, and realistic reflections of themselves. Thus, there is cause for concern if the age group is increasingly isolated from adults and from peers.

Another task in adolescent development is the gradual process of separation from parental authority and the strengthening of personal autonomy. Parents cannot nor should they be their adolescent children's sole source of attentiveness, entertainment, and information. Even if parents are at home from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m., contact with other adults is important. The parent may be home, but the young adolescent will still walk out the door, trying to find "the action." To set young adolescents on their own prematurely, without access to adults other than parents, is to lose an opportunity to help them define who they are and what they can be.

Konopka (1973) regards adolescence as an "age of commitment," a move into "true interdependence." Commitment includes a search for one's identity but also "points toward the emotional, intellectual, and sometimes physical reach for other people as well as ideas, ideologies, causes, work choices." According to Konopka, to acknowledge adolescence as an age of commitment is to elevate it from a stage to be "endured and passed through as rapidly as possible to a stage of earnest and significant human development" (pp. 11-12). Adolescence is a time in life characterized by striving for achievement and competence. Adolescents, shaky in self-esteem, beginning to have a new-found sense of personal destiny, and

intensely self-conscious, depend on adults to afford them opportunities for achievement, competence, and commitment. Their budding sense of self reaches not only inward but also outward to friends, and beyond friends to the larger social order they are beginning to discover and explore. Adults can give young adolescents opportunities for acknowledged competence and can invite the contributions they are ready to make to their communities, rather than barring them from adult recognition and abandoning them to the peer group which, while more often than not supportive and generous, is equally shaky and needy.

Young adolescents are spending the after-school hours unsupervised and uninvolved in their communities at a time in their lives characterized by high energy, a striving for self-definition, and a need to prove their personal competence in a variety of areas. If they are vulnerable to the negative influences of their peers and adults, they are also open to positive influences. Indeed, they look to adults as role models and sources of affection and guidance. Environments that offer realistic expectations of youth, caring relationships with adults, and diverse opportunities for constructive, creative, and enjoyable activities with peers will increase youths' openness to the best in themselves, their peers, and adults (Lefstein & Lipsitz, 1983).

What do young adolescents tell us about the after-school hours? In the Oakland study (Medrich et al., 1982), 41 percent of the 11- and 12-year-olds said they often felt bored and at a loss for things to do after school and on weekends. Many felt that they had little to do that was worthwhile; 82 percent said they watched television because they had nothing else to do. In the *Working Mother* survey (Burtman, 1984), some youngsters said they cherished their time alone, because it was the only time of day when they were on their own. They liked their privacy and solitude. At the same time, about one-third wished they had more activities after school, especially with friends in clubs or athletics.

A survey by Dorsett and Yuwiler (1984) of stress among 13- and 14-year-old residents of Wake County, North Carolina (including Raleigh), found that 33 percent of the young people cited "recreation and entertainment costing too much" as a major concern, thus elevating this to one of the top ten problems in the survey. In addition, 23 percent cited problems with "having rides for after-school activities"; 20 percent said they were concerned about "having enough different kinds of things to do outside of school"; 19 percent were worried about "having an adult you can talk to about problems"; and, surprisingly, 14 percent were concerned about "parents providing enough supervision."

Rogers (1984) studied the out-of-school time use of third, sixth, seventh, and ninth graders in Farmington, Connecticut. In this middle- and upper-middle-class suburban community, 69 percent of the children surveyed came from homes with working mothers and 26 percent from single-parent homes. The children's responses contradict stereotypical expectations of suburban family life. Forty-six percent reported their parents never took them to art shows, museums, or theaters (14 percent said they did so often); 28 percent said their parents never helped them with schoolwork (12 percent, often); 40 percent said they never worked together with their parents on hobbies or other projects (11 percent, often); 69 percent said they never took lessons after school (17 percent, often); and 59 percent said they never did volunteer community service work (11 percent, often). On these youngsters' time-use logs, contradicting the "11 percent often" figure, "no

instances of volunteer community service activities, i.e., working with the elderly, handicapped, etc., were recorded" (p. 4). But more than 50 percent of the youngsters wanted the opportunity to take part in more community service activities. Rogers reported that "surprisingly little time is spent on organized after-school activities such as clubs, lessons, and scouting" (p. 4), and that participation in church or church-related activities was small, especially in grades 7 and 9. Of particular interest to the research team was a "seventh grade slump": "Seventh graders watch more television than do all other groups, but participate less in learning related activities, and dislike school far more than do other groups" (p. 17). (Similar figures are reported by the Search Institute's study [1984] of young adolescents.)

In this community, which was very worried about the effects of television on its children, Rogers found that "relatively small amounts of out-of-school time are spent on what we call 'learning related activities', i.e., clubs, lessons, reading, homework, visits to museums, libraries, attending dance, drama and musical performances, and so forth. . . . It is interesting to note that Farmington's students expressed a strong desire for 'more interesting after-school activities'" (p. 16). The study concludes, "The formal and informal education of our children cannot be resolved by putting the blame on television" (p. 17).

In these studies, young adolescents tell adults that they want more from their parents and their communities. While they are not necessarily physically at risk and would not say that harm is being done them, they seem to be missing opportunities to reinforce what families and schools are able--or willing--to offer, and opportunities to go beyond them. In some cases, they seem more aware of these lost opportunities than their parents are.

What Do Parents Want?

Many studies have documented parent preferences about day care for young children. Few have looked at what parents of young adolescents need and want for their children in the after-school hours. These studies are often flawed by one or more of the following problems: failure to differentiate among age groups (e.g., lumping together 6- to 14-year-olds); failure to give parents an array of options from which to choose (parent preference surveys are usually measures of what already is available, with parents wanting more of the limited services they know about); and failure to explore the guilt, embarrassment, or fear of negligence that leads parents to underreport children in self-care arrangements (Seligson et al., 1983).

On the other hand, the studies may, ironically, be helped by the lack of dialogue about the after-school needs of parents and their early adolescent children. Because parents do not know the "right" answers to questions that explore their views about what age it becomes acceptable to leave a child alone for several hours, they may be more candid. In the Charlotte study (Charlotte Council for Children, 1984), 65 percent of the parents' responses indicated they felt that 11- to 15-year-olds could accept self-care responsibilities. Conversely, the Oakland study (Medrich et al., 1982) found that mothers of sixth graders, who were 11 or 12 years old, arranged their schedules so they could be at home after

school as often as possible. Since the proportions of mothers at home after school were only slightly raised by the presence of another, younger child, we can assume that the sixth graders were not thought to be too old for this supervision or attention (Rubin, 1983).

The Center for Early Adolescence conducted a nonrandomized survey of nearly 1,000 parents with children between ages 10 and 14 from 19 sites nationwide (for a summary of findings, see Farel, 1984). While 80 percent of parents agreed that by age 16 teenagers could be left without supervision after school (and while almost all parents will agree that children under age 10 should not be left unattended), no consensus emerged about children between the ages of 11 and 14. When asked at what age a child could first be left unattended, parents disagreed: close to equal numbers of parents identified ages 11, 12, 13, or 14 as the earliest age at which leaving a child unattended after school first becomes acceptable. This lack of consensus reflects the diversity of children's maturity levels and parental uncertainty about early adolescence. It also probably reflects the lack of social discussion and, indeed, the presence of social confusion, about what child care and neglect actually mean for this age group.

Some parents are clearly worried. Advocates for Children and the United Auto Workers (Thompson, 1983) surveyed a sample of UAW members to measure their needs and attitudes toward youth services and education in New York City. The investigators found that over 60 percent of the families studied did not have child-care arrangements after school. Half were dissatisfied, but the lack of after-school programs made change impossible. In 1972, a School Age Day Care Task Force reported to the Office of Child Development in the (then) U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare that, when parents were asked the five most important things they would look for in an after-school program for 6- to 14-year-olds, their number one priority was adult supervision at all times (answers did not distinguish among ages) (U.S. Office of Child Development, 1972). More than one-quarter of the working mothers surveyed in Los Angeles (United Way of Los Angeles, 1984) said they called home several times a day to check on unsupervised children, thus indirectly acknowledging that their productivity and performance were negatively affected by the latchkey issue. In fact, about 26 percent said they worried at work about their children. As one mother observed, "No one is home when my children get home from school, so I call every hour to make sure they are all right" (p. 7). (The majority of these respondents were from intact families with a college-educated, working mother and a joint annual income of over $25,000.)

The Center for Early Adolescence's parent preference survey (Farel, 1984) found that parents want supervised programs for their children. The similarity of needs and preferences cuts across gender, race, parents' employment status, and geographic region. Parents wish their children would participate in more school-based programs or in organized groups and clubs. They worry most about physical safety. Second only to their concern about safety is a desire for more cultural enrichment, especially reading. They worry that their older school-age children have too much responsibility for younger siblings. They also worry that their children are bored and wasting time. They want their children to learn something or have new experiences. The study concluded: "After-school activities, parents believe, enrich youngsters' lives by offering opportunities for them to develop new skills and feelings of competence and pride. Such programs also instill confidence

in parents that their children are safe and appropriately supervised" (pp. 30-31). The intensity of these parents' concerns is indicated by the time they took, after filling out a lengthy questionnaire, to answer an open-ended question about their worries: two-thirds of the parents replied to this time-consuming essay question.

The Oakland study (Medrich et al., 1982) found that parents were uncomfortable about leaving their early adolescent children alone after school. They worried about safety and the additional television viewing that resulted from their requiring their children to stay indoors and not leave the house. They also were concerned that their youngsters were missing opportunities. Three out of four parents were "very favorably disposed" toward organized activities after school, agreeing that "organized activities are an important part of a child's education." Medrich et al. report that "this approval held across all levels of education and income, throughout all neighborhoods, and for all ethnic groups" (p. 162). At the same time, the study found that parents' satisfaction with community-based services for young adolescents--schools, libraries, parks, and recreation--increased "systematically" with their income and educational level and with overall neighborhood satisfaction, among other variables. Thus, similarity of levels of satisfaction does not follow similarity of worries. In Oakland, dissatisfaction with recreational facilities and organized activities was greatest in low-income, minority neighborhoods.

Sometimes the coincidence of parental satisfaction and serious worries highlights the ambivalence parents feel about the status of their children after school. In the Charlotte study (Charlotte Council for Children, 1984), an overwhelming number of parents said they were satisfied with their child-care arrangements, but the majority were also concerned about having to leave their children alone. In fact, "after-school care was among the highest of ranked responses by both providers and parents/guardians of all needed services and/or program options for children" (p. 27). Similarly, the *Working Mother* survey (Burtman, 1984), in which a high percentage of respondents also attached an essay at the investigator's invitation, found that the mothers felt their children could take care of themselves well. Eighty-two percent were either very or somewhat satisfied with their self-care arrangements. And yet, 50 percent also expressed considerable anxiety about the lack of adult supervision.

Parental ambivalence is evident in the results of the survey of parents in Virginia and Minnesota by Applied Management Sciences (March 1983). In families where all adults worked full time, 25 percent of school-age children in the Virginia sample and 27 percent in the Minnesota sample regularly cared for themselves. About 40 percent of these children started self-care between the ages of 8 and 10, another 40 percent between ages 11 and 13. From their parents' statement that they would feel comfortable leaving a child at home without adult supervision at an older age than when self-care actually began, we can infer that the children were left alone at a younger age than the parents preferred. In both states, parental preference for care by the mother *increased* with the age of the child. But the overwhelming majority of parents with children in self-care said this arrangement met their needs.

In one study, a large number of parents expressed neither worries nor dissatisfaction. In Applied Management Science's survey (September 1983) of child-care arrangements in Montgomery County, Maryland, 21 percent of parents

with children under 14 allowed them to care for themselves or be cared for by a sibling under 14 without adult supervision on a regular basis. The use of self- or sibling care was substantially higher (42 percent vs. 21 percent) in households where all adults worked full time. Among those households relying on self- or sibling care, only 12 percent of parents expressed a preference for another type of care. Most of these parents, whose children tended to be 9 years old or older (83 percent), said their children were old enough to handle the responsibility. Over one-third of the county's 9- to 11-year-olds and approximately three-quarters of 12- to 13-year-olds were in self- or sibling care.

While it is too soon to conclude that parents are becoming more complacent about children being on their own in the after-school hours, it does appear to be increasingly acceptable for parents to admit to having latchkey children. One senses the weakening of parental resistance and ingenuity in some of the studies, the Montgomery County survey being the most dramatic example of the resolution of ambivalence through inaction and acceptance. From a review of most parent surveys, however, it does not appear that self-care has become an acceptable norm. Many parents are worried and want more for their children.

Medrich et al. (1982) caution that "psychologists, educators, and child development experts have put many parents in a guilt-inducing bind. Parents have been persuaded that what children do when they are not in school is important in terms of future prospects, but they may not have the time, energy, or resources to ensure their children a rich set of out-of-school opportunities" (p. 7). These parents are a potential political lobby and a potential clientele for child-care and youth workers. But, as Medrich and his associates conclude, "Only if parents believe that out-of-school time use represents an urgent issue in terms of their children's present and future well-being can we expect any serious dialogue within families on the subject" (p. 246)--or, we can add, within communities, service agencies, and legislative and regulatory bodies.

What Are the Barriers to Using Available Services?

Concerned parents face considerable barriers in arranging their children's after-school hours. The barrier cited most often by parents is *the lack of safety.* In a dangerous neighborhood, it is not safe for young adolescents to walk to and from an after-school program that is, perhaps, just several blocks away from school or home. Especially in the late fall and early winter, many programs cannot reassure parents about their children's safety after dark. Parents are therefore likely to instruct their children to go home after school, lock the door, and turn on the television set to alert burglars that someone is at home. This starts the "3:00 syndrome" when parents babysit from work by telephone.

Related to the safety issue and also a problem in its own right is *the lack of transportation.* If a program can afford a van or a bus, it can overcome the safety issue by transporting participants. Few programs have the funds to do this. Lack of transportation also limits access. Particularly in rural and suburban areas, young people simply cannot get to the programs that are offered if they have no parents or other adults at home to provide transportation. This is one of the few

instances in which some poorer, urban children may be more advantaged than wealthier, suburban children because public transportation can give them access to activities that attract them. (See Medrich et al., 1982, for a comparison of young adolescents' mobility in various neighborhoods.) The Oakland study, the Charlotte study, and the Center for Early Adolescence's parent preference survey all found that lack of transportation is one of the most serious barriers to after-school programs for young adolescents.

Another serious access issue is *the lack of financial resources*. Medrich et al. (1982) found that 28 percent of the Oakland sixth graders were involved only in organized activities that were free of charge, while 19 percent were involved only in activities that charged fees, and this pattern varied "systematically" with family income. As one of Medrich's co-researchers said, "A clear pattern of class differences emerges" (Rubin, 1983, p. 120). In the Charlotte study (Charlotte Council for Children, 1984), of those parents who left their children alone, 47 percent said they did so because they could not afford to do otherwise. While the issue of children on their own crosses income boundaries, the cost of supervision and enrichment takes its heaviest toll on low-income families, who may be unable to pay the fees associated with after-school activities. This issue of limited financial access, more than any other, pushes the 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. problem into the public policy arena.

Yet a fourth access issue that parents must overcome is the *lack of information* about existing after-school programs. While some cities and counties have resource and referral networks for parents seeking child care for young children, no such networks are in place for parents of young adolescents. The Center for Early Adolescence's parent preference survey (Farel, 1984) found that parents' most frequent sources of information about after-school activities are their children and the messages they bring home from school. Because these messages rarely inform parents about the range of options available in the community, and because young adolescents are, at best, erratic bearers of messages from school, programs may languish for lack of participation, while parents worry about their children's lack of after-school activities.

In some cases, there are no messages because there are no options. Many parents find few or no programs geared to the needs and interests of their early adolescent children. While it may seem absurdly obvious, it bears saying: a serious obstacle to using available services is *the lack of available services*. The California Senate Office of Research found that, especially in rural areas, no care was available--at any cost (Kersten, n.d.). As one parent volunteered in the Center for Early Adolescence's survey, "There are so few options open that it's absolutely disgusting" (cited in Farel, 1984, p. 30).

One explanation for the paucity of programs is tied directly to early adolescent development. Young adolescents, who are beginning to make autonomous decisions, are no longer malleable young children who have little say about where they spend the hours after school. The interests and preferences of this singularly diverse age group are rarely met by one program design. When parents are asked what problems they experience in finding suitable after-school programs for their junior high-aged youngsters, *the child's refusal to attend* is always high on the list of barriers cited. Young adolescents, as Medrich et al. (1982) say, "vote with their feet" (p. 162). They want to be doing what they like to do, in a comfortable

setting, with their friends. They "age out" of programs designed for younger children, refusing to return to the scenes of their now rejected childhood activities unless the programs become responsive to their new sense of independence and maturity. In a study prepared by the California Senate Office of Research, Rooney (1983) concludes that when personal preference comes into play, a child may simply refuse to attend an inappropriately designed program. "For parents faced by budget constraints, a child's resistance to 'babysitting' may mean the difference between supervision and a latchkey child situation" (p. 8). Pressed for time, low on energy after a day's work, unable to locate information about what the community offers, and worried about safety, parents may forego the tiresome negotiations with a resistant young adolescent in favor of yielding to self-care in what begins to look to them like a rather short time slot.

A related issue is *the lack of a cadre of professional youth workers* who are concerned exclusively with the needs of young adolescents. Youth work is not a profession in the United States. Child developmentalists specialize for the most part in early childhood and the early elementary years. As children approach adolescence, few professionals or volunteers have the training or inclination to design and implement after-school programs geared to their changing bodies, minds, and emotions. It is, then, not surprising that even as increasing numbers of parents leave young adolescents alone and unattended in the after-school hours, "providers of after-school services [for younger children] have as yet failed to recognize and respond to this sizable and growing constituency" (Medrich et al., 1982, p. 241).

Finally, a subtle but pervasive barrier to both the provision of services and the use of accessible services is *the persistent confusion in this country about who young adolescents are and what we think it is appropriate for them to do.* Too old for babysitters and too young for paid employment, young adolescents spend several years in a gray area that seems to defy coherent public policy setting.

Every so often, a ruckus occurs that forces us to acknowledge our confusion about the age group. The so-called "strawberry brouhaha" is one such incident, pitting the state of Washington against Washington, D.C. An amendment to the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1974 had the unintended effect of banning 10- and 11-year-olds from picking as much as 25 percent of Washington's annual $5.6 million berry crop. Should 10- and 11-year-old children be allowed to continue a "hallowed summer custom" and pick the strawberry crop? (Sinclair, 1980, p. A7) Or, to rephrase the question, should children under 12 be allowed to labor in hot fields on piecework? Is the preservation of this local tradition important because it teaches the work ethic, responsibility, and the value of money to impressionable youngsters, integrating them into the intensive three-week period when teens and adults work together to harvest their crop? On the other hand, is this tradition harmful to children because it is driven only by the profit motive of adults?

The tension in this case between the exploitation of children and their meaningful participation in the culture of their community set off a battle that

filled pages of the *Congressional Record* with wonderful flights of rhetoric. But, the issue of participation versus exploitation remains unresolved.*

The "strawberry brouhaha" calls into question the basis on which we make decisions to curb, protect, and enrich young adolescents. The same question is evoked by attempts to change labor rules--for instance, to allow 14- and 15-year-olds to work until 9:00 on school nights, 10:00 on nonschool nights, and up to 24 hours per week during the school year. Is this an effort to make these young people feel needed, to value their contribution, and thereby to encourage among them the flowering of initiative and responsibility that was exhibited by adolescents of the Depression era? (On the Depression, see Elder, 1974.) Or is it, instead, an attempt by businesses, especially fast-food chains employing 60 percent of all young people who work, to expand the pool of ready and cheap labor? These questions are not easily answered, nor do policymakers and youth advocates line up predictably in support of one position or the other. The tensions between prolonged dependency and premature independence, and between exploitation and participation, are too powerful for easy resolution.

These tensions serve as barriers to the provision of services to young adolescents in the after-school hours. The lack of societal clarity about age-appropriate behavior on the part of young people and of appropriate role expectations on the part of adults adds a dimension of difficulty in programming for the age group that many adults would just as soon not grapple with. Adults will need to have a clearer sense of their expectations for young adolescents before this barrier is overcome.

Who Should Be Served?

The scope of the 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. problem, including parental ambivalence and concern, will not resolve itself. Short of reversing the trend toward increased numbers of single-parent families and women in the labor force, increasing numbers of young adolescents will be on their own after school. In addition, the market economy has not responded vigorously to the need for after-school programs for young adolescents. Because these vulnerable young people--barely emerged from childhood--cannot develop well without help, we can expect to see continued pressure on local chapters of United Way to fund youth development programs; continued pressure for legislative initiatives at the state and national levels to provide school-age child care; and continued calls for action from municipal and statewide studies that address both child-care and youth development needs.

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*The law was changed to allow the picking to resume, but with a safeguard prompted by warnings about health perils from agriculture chemists. According to the new law, the Secretary of Labor cannot grant waivers for 10- and 11-year-olds unless the grower can prove that the pesticides and other chemicals used have no adverse effects on children. Since the growers cannot prove this, the youngsters are not allowed in the fields. One assumes they are at home alone, watching television, while their 12-year-old siblings are in the fields, presumably adequately mature to withstand economic exploitation and toxic chemicals.

Who should be served by these initiatives? A persuasive argument for a severely limited public response to all children's policy issues has been made by Gilbert Steiner (1976, p. 255): "The children's policy most feasible--and most desirable--is one targeted on poor children, handicapped children, and children without permanent homes. . . . A children's policy will be successful enough if it concentrates on ways to compensate demonstrably unlucky children whose bodies or minds are sick or whose families are unstable or in poverty." Steiner's argument assumes that these are the "unlucky children whose parents cannot provide them a start equal to that provided most children." If we could identify the young adolescents who are most "demonstrably unlucky" and therefore most at risk in the after-school hours, we could focus our efforts on lessening the danger they are in.

It is difficult, however, to identify who from among the entire age group is at greatest risk of engaging in antisocial and personally destructive behavior, or who, in terms of the latchkey issue, is most unfortunate. For instance, evidence indicates an increase in sexual activity among all adolescents. According to the Alan Guttmacher Institute (1981), by age 13, one girl in fifty has had sexual intercourse at least once; by age 14, one in ten, a dramatic increase; and by age 15, one in five.

These figures are not confined to a particular social or economic class. The most striking evidence of widespread and early sexual activity among white middle-class youth comes from the Search Institute's survey (1984) of fifth through ninth graders in 13 agencies, 10 of which were national Protestant church organizations. Thus, the sample was heavily weighted to families that maintain church affiliations, and respondents were the more actively committed participants in church groups. Blacks, Hispanics, and youths from single-parent families were underrepresented. In this biased sample, 12 percent of fifth graders, 16 percent of sixth graders, 15 percent of seventh graders, 17 percent of eighth graders, and 20 percent of ninth graders reported having had sexual intercourse at least one time. While it is possible that the younger children were not sure what was being asked of them, we can assume that the eighth and ninth graders understood the meaning of "sexual intercourse" and "going all the way."

While births to older teenagers are declining, births to younger teenagers have remained stubbornly level. Further, the death rate from complications during pregnancy and childbirth is 60 percent greater for teenagers under age 15 than for women in their twenties (Testa & Wulczyn, 1980). In general, teenagers are more likely to suffer from maternal and infant mortality and morbidity. Also, "so strong is the relationship between teenage pregnancy and financial dependency that researchers at the Urban Institute estimate that each year a woman delays her first birth, the probability that she will be in poverty at age 27 is reduced by about two percentage points" (Testa & Wulczyn, 1980, p. 31).

Despite the many differences of opinion and values held by the American public, consensus can be reached on the goals of delaying sexual activity and avoiding early pregnancy. As increasing numbers of young adolescents are left unsupervised and alone, increasing numbers can be sexually active in the comfort of their own homes, making vital decisions very early about life-enhancing and life-threatening behavior (Sorensen, 1973; Zelnik, Kantner, & Ford, 1981). This would appear to argue for a public policy initiative especially targeted to pubertal girls, but, one would hope, to boys as well.

Juvenile crime is another area in which delimiting the population to be served by public initiatives relies on shaky evidence. The National Crime Survey of 1976, using data from 1972 and 1974 (the most recent), reported provocative statistics of teenage criminal victimization from a five-city study (Chicago, Detroit, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, and New York). The data suggest a rise in victimization in major cities, especially among 12- to 15-year-olds (Testa & Wulczyn, 1980, p. 72). Although juvenile crime appears to be decreasing somewhat, the figures are nonetheless disheartening. In 1979 juveniles accounted for approximately 20 percent of all violent crime arrests and 44 percent of all serious property crime arrests ("Serious Juvenile Crime," 1981). Twenty-five percent of juvenile offenders are 12 to 14 years old (National Center for Juvenile Justice, 1981, table 3.3). While law enforcement officials say that most adolescents are law-abiding, a countywide study in and around Irvine, California, found that five out of six juveniles referred to a police project for troubled youths were latchkey children. In Orange County, California, police estimate that 25 percent of the city's daytime thefts are committed by "unattended children." (Wong, 1981)

Self-report studies indicate that the junior high-aged population as a whole is at risk for committing acts of delinquency. For instance, in an effort to reduce delinquency and increase positive youth involvement, Stratford, Connecticut, conducted a survey of young people in grades 7-12 in the spring of 1980 (Francis & Walker, 1981). The investigators found, to their amazement (but consonant with other self-report studies), that more than 90 percent of the respondents reported having been involved in at least one form of delinquent activity. Grade level turned out to be an important correlate in the findings. With the exception of drug and alcohol use and distribution, all types of delinquency were most prevalent among eighth and ninth graders, then leveled off or decreased from the tenth through twelfth grades. The investigators thus report on what they call "free floating delinquency" that is seemingly "quasinormal." It would appear that the entire population of young adolescents is "at risk" of delinquency, not just those who are poor, living in inner cities, or wearing latchkeys.

If we were able to draw a profile of the youth most likely to experience or commit personal and social harm in the after-school hours, policy setting would be greatly simplified. For instance, Glick (1981) demonstrates that increasing numbers of young adolescents, starting at age 10, are living in single-parent homes with mothers who are more likely to work and to work longer hours than the mothers of children in any other family organization. These youngsters are disproportionately black. (In 1980, 46 percent of black children under age 18 were living with one parent and 42 percent with two parents.) Medrich et al. (1982) found that a larger proportion of white than black sixth graders reported having gone to all types of cultural and recreational activities with their parents. Some, but not all, of the difference is accounted for by income. (In 1983, 45 percent of black school-age children lived in poverty [U.S. Congressional Budget Office, 1984].)

Do these figures indicate that we should focus our efforts on black young adolescents living in poverty? When we take into account the studies already cited, showing that urban and suburban black children are, in some cases, *less* likely to be without supervision than are white children, and that poor children are *less* likely to be fending for themselves than middle-class children, the target

becomes unfocused. In addition, no argument can be made for a causal relationship between being left unattended and being at risk that differentiates among race, ethnicity, social class, or sex.

Statistics on suicide and homicide confound the issue further. According to Testa and Wulczyn (1980), the incidence of adolescent suicide is two times greater for whites than for blacks, and three to four times greater for boys than for girls. The incidence of homicide, however, is five times greater for black teenagers than for white. Assuming one could show a causal or even correlative relationship between the latchkey issue and suicide or homicide rates, what would the target population be then?

Child abuse presents similar challenges. The incidence of reported abuse is distributed fairly evenly across age and sex. The type and severity, however, vary with both age and sex. As children grow into adolescence, the incidence of abuse does not decrease; sexual abuse, especially for girls, rises (Testa & Wulczyn, 1980). Since there is evidence that the incidence of sexual abuse may be exacerbated by the latchkey issue, should policy be set establishing after-school programs that target early adolescent girls in particular?

Nor can we target geographic areas on the assumption that urban children are at a greater disadvantage than suburban children. In fact, as Medrich et al. (1982) found, inner-city sixth graders were more likely to travel on their own around the city than were children in the high status neighborhoods who were constrained by the lack of public transportation and the hilly terrain of Oakland's outskirts. Suburban youngsters often live in separate residential areas where the library, the ballfield, and the community center are out of reach. We may well be witnessing a trend toward the increasing solitude of middle-class youth, who lack access to public facilities, to public transportation, and to an adult who can serve as chauffeur.

In focusing public policy on areas of greatest need, we might also look at configurations of family organization. Coolsen (1983) identifies three basic types of families that produce large numbers of latchkey children: the two-paycheck, blue-collar family; the dual-career, middle-class family; and the single-parent family whose working mother's earnings are low. As we have seen, it is difficult to argue that the children of one of these family types are most at risk because they lack adult supervision. Also, because of external constraints and the nature of early adolescent development, as we have argued, the adolescent offspring of a fourth family type, the male-breadwinner-with-mother-at-home family (14 percent of all families), are not likely to be engaged in after-school activities that are substantially more enriched and enriching than adolescents in the latchkey households (86 percent of Coolsen's sample). It would appear, then, that all family types can make a claim on public policy initiatives regarding the 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. time slot. Focusing public policy on particular family configurations is not a productive pursuit.

One direction that youth policy has taken in the past decade and a half is more promising. Until the 1970s, youth development was tied conceptually to delinquency prevention, as in the case of the Youth Development and Delinquency Prevention Administration, a former agency of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. While the tie between youth development and

delinquency prevention has remained strong, policy shifted in the 1970s toward funding youth employment programs as a prevention strategy.

According to some observers, this shift reflected an attempt to change the focus from "Why do kids get into trouble?" to "How do most youth become useful, productive, and contributing adults in their communities?" (Bird, Beville, Carlson, & Johnson, 1978, p. 3) But, since the second question has been asked in reference to older adolescents, whatever benefits that may have resulted accrue to that age group rather than the early adolescent population. Nonetheless, the focus on youth employment is instructive because it forces us to consider strategies for positive interventions well before harm is done to or by adolescents. It makes the connection between the latchkey issue as a child-care need and the latchkey issue as a youth development opportunity. It implies that young people become useful, productive, and contributing members of their communities because their need for supervision is met *and* because they are given positive opportunities to develop.

As in all family support programs, the debate about whether to provide services selectively or universally to groups of families and youth becomes central to public policy decisions regarding the 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. issue. Funding constraints drive policymakers toward programs targeted to high-risk families. This pressure threatens to remove public attention from the entire latchkey issue. Because we cannot readily identify those young people at highest risk, we are compelled to consider arguments for more universal policies at a politically inopportune time.

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In the public arena, the 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. dilemma is a "cool" policy issue because we cannot argue with assurance that bad things will happen to young people and their communities if substantial numbers of young adolescents remain in self-care after school. However, available data on the growing number of young adolescents in self-care are troubling. The statistics on suicide, pregnancy, crime, and other indicators of youth alienation and distress also are cause for concern. When taken together, the available numbers should make us uneasy about the well-being of young adolescents at a particularly vulnerable time in their lives. It may be that young adolescents are in jeopardy, and that statistics in the next decade will confirm the wisdom of the researchers, professionals, and policymakers who are alarmed. In that case, by the time researchers have gathered, analyzed, and reported their findings, the 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. issue will be a "hot" policy issue requiring emergency intervention measures.

But, we do not have to wait for young adolescents to be, in Steiner's words (1976, p. 255), "demonstrably unlucky" to recommend action. We can, instead, base our argument for public attention on foregone opportunities. We cannot guarantee that bad things will happen, but we can argue that good things are not happening. It is the contention of this report that increasing numbers of young people are left to their own devices at a critical time in their development. They are losing opportunities to be culturally enriched, to interact positively with peers and adults, and to contribute to their communities. We are losing opportunities as adults to expand their expectations of what they might become and to integrate them into the fabric of our communities.

The number of young adolescents on their own is increasing. There remain few attractive choices for their parents, and many barriers that make those options inaccessible. As yet, we can point to no significant public or private sector initiatives that respond either to the potential risks or to the lost opportunities inherent in their situation.

Given the sheer number of young adolescents on their own, it is becoming evident to youth-serving professionals and volunteers and to increasingly forceful legislators that "we should do something." To determine what should be done, we must first carefully examine what has already been done and with what results.

Chapter 2

Community-Based After-School Programs for Young Adolescents

The briefest of overviews of after-school programs for young adolescents uncovers a crazy quilt, with disparate patches in place for different historical reasons, reaching for different and sometimes opposing objectives, and almost universally functioning without evaluation as to outcomes. The ideology and lack of self-scrutiny of youth-serving programs are as American as apple pie--and crazy quilts.

A Brief History of After-School Programs

> Thus saith the Lord . . . And the streets
> of the city shall be full of boys and girls
> playing in the streets thereof.
>
> Zechariah 8:4-5
> Cited in Goodman (1979)
>
> • •
>
> Soon as three o'clock rolls around
> you finally lay your burden down.
> Close your books,
> Get out of your seat,
> Down the hall and into the street.
>
> Chuck Berry, "School Days"
> Cited in Medrich, Roizen,
> Rubin, and Buckley (1982)

It sounds so joyous: young people, laying down the burdens of scholarship and work, tumbling into streets that peal with their playful shouts and laughter. But children's play was serious business to policymakers at the turn of the century. As early as 1898, a report of the University Settlement in New York stated, "Waterloo was won in part on the playing fields of Eton, said Wellington; good government for New York may partially be won on the playgrounds of the East Side" (cited in Goodman, 1979, p. 30). Howard S. Braucher, secretary of the Playground Association of America, argued in 1916 that "the expenditure of tax funds for community centers [including playgrounds and vacation schools] is the best form of insurance against assassination and social revolution" (cited in ibid., p. 61).

At stake were mainstream middle-class norms, threatened by the waves of immigrants who crowded into increasingly congested tenements that afforded no indoor play space for the young. Leisure time became a youth problem, that is, a problem for adults who worried about immigrant youth. New York City's *Report on the Vacation Schools and Playgrounds of 1900* argued for the construction of playgrounds and vacation schools as weapons to disintegrate vestiges of foreign working-class cultures and integrate working-class youth into the middle class. Started in 1895 by the Board of Education as a result of Jacob Riis's exposés of tenement life, playgrounds grew quickly into a movement. In 1894, the Tenement

Commission lobbied successfully for a compulsory school playground law. By 1900, there were more than 50 playgrounds attached to school buildings in New York City (Goodman, 1979). By 1910, *The Playground*, a publication of the Playground Association of America, reported that 246 cities had established supervised playgrounds in the previous two years alone.

The Playground Association had been organized in 1906 to keep children off the street. Within several years, its goals had expanded to encourage "socialization for family life, for citizenship, and for production" (Goodman, 1979, p. 80). Its influence was dramatic. In 1910, Braucher reported:

> The part which play is to have in social progress is being recognized as never before, although the playground movement is yet in its infancy. The number of cities maintaining playgrounds has grown from 90 in 1907 to 177 in 1908, and 336 in 1909. One hundred and fifty-four cities are now conducting campaigns to secure playgrounds. Two hundred and sixty-seven cities alone maintain 1,535 playgrounds, 55 cities have playground associations, and in 15 the mayors have appointed special playground commissions. About 49 per cent. [sic] of the cities maintaining playgrounds provide the money wholly or in part by public taxation. (cited on p. 331)

Child's play had become public policy, reaching beyond socialization: "the play habit" and "the play spirit" were to shorten "the time which must elapse before poverty and dependency shall be practically ended, [raising] all life to a higher plane" (cited on pp. 332-33).

At the same time, the settlement house movement flourished. The movements were intertwined as settlement house workers campaigned vigorously for adequate play space. Settlement houses became political and educational institutions working for social reform. As Goodman (1979) says of New York's settlements, they "were to be outposts of culture and civilization amid the squalor of Harlem, Little Italy, and the Lower East Side. Sponsored by the rich and operated by their offspring and middle-class social workers, the settlements participated in the progressive struggle for urban reform while they ran domestic science classes for young women, reading classes for immigrants, conducted sports leagues, sponsored lectures, and generally ran programs for cultural or moral 'betterment'" (p. 40). The conservative motives behind these crusading efforts were not lost on the immigrants. For instance, A. H. Fromerson, editor of the English Department of the *Jewish Daily News*, wrote in the 1904 *Proceedings of the National Conference of Jewish Charities*, "The settlements have conspired with the big city to rob the boy of his unalienable right to play: the city by means of ordinances and prohibitions; the settlement by means of sit-up-straight-and-be-good social rooms, literature clubs, civic clubs, basket-weaving and scroll iron works" (cited in Goodman, 1979, p. 40).

This is not the view we usually take of the child-saving movement, led by Jane Addams, Jacob Riis, Lillian Wald, and Graham Taylor, which brought relief to the indigent, healed the ailing, fed the starving, and advocated economic and political reforms. Nor is it the only interpretation of work done specifically to socialize young people into American culture. Functions that have now been

absorbed by other institutions began in community centers as efforts to rescue young people from lives of grinding penury. For instance, Frank Parsons, often called "the father of guidance," began his work not in schools but in a community center. In 1908, he established the Vocation Bureau in Civic Service House to provide vocational guidance to unskilled child laborers who were leaving public schools to become wage earners. It was his hope that vocational guidance would become a part of every school system. The impact of his work would come later. Meanwhile, guidance for young adolescents was institutionalized in an out-of-school, community-based center. (Aubrey, 1982)

While the organized play movement was but one aspect of the larger "child-saving" reform effort, its roots were deeply conservative. It combined public with voluntaristic approaches to child welfare, attempting to transplant play from the disorganization of uncontrolled city streets to a community-controlled institution that could supersede the urban, ethnic family.

Between 1880 and 1920, municipal governments spent over $100 million for the construction and staffing of playgrounds to isolate young adolescents from unhealthy parental influence, substitute peer dependence for family supervision, provide an opportunity for healthy physical exercise, develop cognitive skills, and instill moral and social values for future workers and citizens (Cavallo, 1981). This was a self-acknowledged effort on behalf of white Anglo-Saxon cultural dominance.

Today the public presence in youth development is interpreted as a liberal effort to extend the public realm. During the first two decades of the century, it represented a deeply conservative impulse to preserve the dominance of upper-middle-class culture threatened by the apparent disarray and potential power of alien norms of child-rearing. Youth development as public policy, whatever else the motives, commanded big budgets because it was the equivalent of national defense. As Cavallo (1981) says, "Child-saving efforts were wide-ranging. The movement embraced publicly supported child welfare programs, such as child labor legislation, compulsory education, and medical inspection programs in public schools, as well as voluntaristic, nongovernmental efforts, including the creation of a host of boys' and girls' associations, such as the Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, and Camp Fire Girls" (p. 1).

Despite apparent similarities, the various voluntary youth-serving associations have distinct histories and mandates. In *Boy Scouts of America*, published in 1914, Daniel Carter Beard wrote, "The wilderness is gone, the buckskin man is gone, the painted Indian has hit the trail over the Great Divide, the hardships and privations of pioneer life which did so much to develop sterling manhood are now but a legend in history, and we must depend upon the Boy Scout Movement to produce MEN of the future" (cited in Kleinfeld & Shinkwin, 1984, p. 1). Boy Scouts "began as a social work agency devoted to protecting the children of the middle classes from urban vice, to saving the children of the poor, and above all, to making real men out of city boys" (ibid., p. 2).

Boys Clubs, on the other hand, were not concerned about preserving the ideal of manhood being sapped by urban life. From the outset, their mission was to provide disadvantaged urban boys with structured, out-of-school activities on a daily basis, and to promote their physical, social, educational, and vocational

development. The term "Boys' Club" was probably used for the first time in 1871, when the United Workers group in New Haven, Connecticut, rented space they designated as a "Boys' Club" to distinguish it from a men's coffee shop and reading room that they also operated. (The organization has since argued about the use of an apostrophe in "Boys' Club," some clubs insisting that the apostrophe be retained to show that the club really belongs to the boys, and no one else.) The various clubs formed in the nineteenth century were federated in 1906 into a national organization to serve the developmental needs of city boys.

While the contrast in the origins of Boy Scouts and Boys Clubs has clouded over the decades, it is observable, nonetheless, in the enduring preponderance of a white, middle-class clientele in Boy Scouts and a multiracial, multi-ethnic, and working-class clientele in Boys Clubs. Both were, and still are, child-saving efforts fostering values of physical fitness, citizenship, patriotism, piety, self-discipline, and opportunity enhancement. Nonetheless, they retain an element of the contradictory objectives deeply embedded in their history: segregating some youth from others to "make good boys better" (Kleinfeld & Shinkwin, 1984) versus introducing potentially excluded youth to opportunities in the mainstream culture.

One effort on behalf of American youth was not in the private sector; rather, it was part of major national social legislation to improve agriculture. The Smith-Lever Act of 1914 established the Cooperative Extension Service to distribute information about agriculture and home economics, in part through youth clubs. These 4-H clubs were a mechanism for demonstrating the latest scientific and technological advances in agriculture to future farmers and, through them, to their parents. (Kleinfeld & Shinkwin, 1982) An article by Gertrude Warren in the *Journal of Home Economics* of May 1921, entitled "Relation of Boys' and Girls' Club Work to the Rural Home and Community," reflects the zeal behind the extension strategy to mold young people in "right habits and standards." They "are the group reached on the threshold of the most intensive period of human usefulness as farmers and homemakers." (p. 207) "In all extension work," Warren instructs, "it has been recognized that permanent progress toward better agriculture and homemaking is directly dependent upon the kind and amount of leadership developed. Boys' and Girls' club work is a simple and efficient system for developing rural young people into such leaders. . ." (p. 212).

Nor could agricultural work proceed if it was highly sexist. Girls were not relegated solely to gardening, bread baking, and canning:

> During 1920, in the North and West, over five thousand girls were enrolled in live-stock and crop clubs. Leaders encourage rural girls in these activities, for it is believed that such work broadens the sphere of influence of the girl in her future role of wife and mother. She is then able to appreciate and discriminate justly in attacking and helping to solve rural problems that arise, establishing confidence in others and becoming herself a recognized force in farm and home development. (Warren, 1921, p. 211)

Likewise, rural boys were to learn homemaking, "so that through this common effort of boys and girls for farm and home betterment there will develop a sympathetic understanding and common interest in the farm and home" (ibid., p. 211). The contrast with Beard's "buckskin man" and "sterling manhood" is striking.

In addition, the role of socialization was reversed in the 4-H strategy: young people were to serve as models for adults. To improve the poor quality of homemade bread, boys and girls learned how to make various kinds of bread in bread clubs, thus improving nutritional standards in their homes.

> For instance, the five thousand Minnesota boys and girls, who during 1920 belonged to bread clubs, are bound to have an influence in their homes and communities, just as has a club of twenty Indian girls who taught their mothers how to make yeast and quick breads. . . . Foreign-born boys and girls in rural districts . . . rarely miss a meeting and often bring their parents with them, thus making club work of benefit in the broad movement of Americanization. (Warren, 1921, p. 208)

Canning clubs, which aided the food conservation effort during World War I, taught girls and boys the latest technology in food preservation. Public demonstrations drew adults because of their interest in their children; through the demonstrations and the young people's expertise at home, adults were instructed in new home "economics." In effect, 4-H was a demonstration project using young people as a vehicle to influence dubious and untutored adults. It was also a leadership development and vocational training effort, one that has retained its public support for 70 years.

Although this brief summary of several historical youth-serving efforts hardly does justice to the organizations themselves, it highlights one noteworthy point. For all their contradictory motives, youth movements in this country have recognized the public need--whether voluntary or paid from municipal, state, and federal budgets--to plan for young adolescents in the after-school hours. Youth movements develop for many reasons, including fears for public safety and social integrity; fears about loss of manhood and social purity; a concern that poor, working-class youth lack opportunities to partake of the American cornucopia; or a recognition that young people can make a positive contribution to their homes and communities. They almost always develop out of an awareness that young people are tomorrow's potential leaders, to whom adults owe time, attentiveness, and instruction. Sometimes the underlying emotions are fear and distrust; sometimes, concern and respect. Sometimes there is a desire to limit young people through social controls; sometimes, to enhance their options through an array of opportunities. The politics swing from the conservative to the progressive. Across this broad spectrum of motives, emotions, social vision, and politics, stitching the patches of the crazy quilt together, is a consistent concern for the well-being of young people as they become adolescents in their communities.

An Overview of After-School Programs for Young Adolescents

Unlike school "systems," there are no systems of after-school activities for young adolescents. Organized programs are sparsely dotted across the American landscape. This discussion may make them appear more numerous than they

actually are, because the diversity of goals, sponsors, costs, and sources of funding for existing programs leads to lengthy discourse.

Organized after-school programs may be located in schools, community centers, religious institutions, museums, libraries, the separate facilities of Ys, Boys Clubs, and Girls Clubs, or in private homes. They may be sponsored by national youth-serving organizations, municipal recreation departments, social service agencies, boards of education, religious and cultural organizations, or for-profit entrepreneurs. They may offer one or more of the following: recreation, tutoring, academic enrichment, cultural activities, day care, religious instruction, career education, personal counseling, and community service opportunities. Their funding comes from one or more of a variety of sources, including fees and dues, fund-raising events, foundation grants, gifts from donors, and local, state, and federal support.

Goals

The goals of after-school programs range from offering a safe, supervised recreation area protected from inclement weather to enhancing "learning, self-reliance, and [the] ability to be a purposeful and productive member of our society" (Rheedlen Foundation, cited in Lefstein & Lipsitz, 1983, p. 111). A number of these programs reflect a public concern about issues seen as critical to adolescent development. For instance, some programs strive to aid the transition from schooling to employment for populations of youngsters whose families and schools typically fail to help them make that transition. Some dispense age-appropriate information about human sexuality, child-rearing, and personal decision making. Some provide health screening, referral, and, in unusual cases, treatment. Some provide counseling for adolescents and their families to prevent truancy, running away, child abuse, and court-ordered removal from parental supervision. Some do all these, and more. Thus, after-school programs have the potential to be the delivery system for preventive and remedial services that result from public policy initiatives.

The Education for Parenthood (EFP) programs are a case in point. In 1972, because of concern that children and adolescents were receiving no information or skills to prepare them for child-rearing, federal legislation was passed to encourage curricular development and classes not just in schools, but also in national youth-serving agencies. Boy Scouts, Boys Clubs, 4-H, Girl Scouts, the National Federation of Settlements and Neighborhood Centers, the Salvation Army, and the Save the Children Foundation offered EFP programs to between 6,000 and 7,000 of their constituents, primarily young adolescents. No brief can be made for the general quality of these efforts since, from the outset, the program definition was hazy, the focus overly broad, and the guidelines weak. Nonetheless, EFP remains an example of the capacity of after-school programs to respond to federal priorities and the recognition at the federal level of these organizations as socializing agents and efficient vehicles for information and skill-building efforts.

Although some programs expressly address parental concerns about the limitations of schools as educational, cultural, and socializing agencies, the goals of after-school programs for young adolescents do not usually consider parental priorities. In the triangle formed by youth worker, young adolescent, and parent,

the third angle is all too often taken for granted, ignored, or even lopped off. However, as increasing numbers of parents seek after-school programs for their early adolescent children, programs will have to become sensitive to the capacities and preferences of this potentially large constituency. It has been reported, for example, that minority parents and those who are disaffected by schools are especially insistent that after-school programs have an educational component (Center for Early Adolescence, 1984).

Models

"Solutions" to the latchkey issue include training in self-care, hotlines, check-in programs, and a wide range of organized programs. There are many models from which to choose.

Perhaps the most discussed at present is skills training or the "survival skills" model. Curricula, manuals, and classes like Camp Fire's "I Can Do It," Boy Scouts' "Prepared for Today," and the National Committee for Prevention of Child Abuse's "I'm in Charge" are designed to minimize the negative effects of being alone after school. Such courses teach young people how to cook a snack without setting the kitchen on fire, how to answer the phone without revealing that adults are absent, how to lock oneself safely in the house or apartment, and other essential tips for survival on one's own. Easy to produce and purchase, self-care manuals are a popular but double-edged sword if they lull parents and policymakers into a false sense of security. As Kersten (n.d.) reports from the California Senate Office of Research, "Although this is better than nothing, it is not a viable solution."

Also popular are telephone hotlines, a low-cost strategy for providing connection by voice between adults and youngsters on their own. For instance, PhoneFriend is a help-line community service project sponsored by the State College, Pennsylvania branch of the American Association of University Women in cooperation with State College's Women's Resource Center. PhoneFriend is staffed by trained volunteers from 2:30 to 5:30 p.m. on school days and 9:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on weekdays when school is out. It serves approximately 4,500 children and young adolescents, giving them information and emotional support and helping them help themselves. (Charlotte Council for Children, 1984) The State College project has been replicated nationwide and now has a national newsletter and training curriculum.

Another hotline is "Chatters" in Houston, a telephone reassurance service for children on their own, staffed by counselors until 6:00 p.m. Parents may call if they suspect trouble. A "Chatters" counselor can alert a neighbor or nearby relative. Unlike PhoneFriend, which is free and anonymous, "Chatters" is a subscription service costing $30 per year for weekday afternoons. Again, as Kersten (n.d.) says, hotlines provide inadequate emotional or social support; they are useless if a child is in immediate physical danger. They are better than nothing only if they are the first rather than the only line of offense in public policy. They address minimal needs of latchkey children. They do not stimulate young people's development or meet parents' preferences for enhancing their children's opportunities from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m.

Nor can it be argued that organizations like 4-H or Scouts satisfy all the pressing after-school needs of young adolescents and their parents. As a rule these clubs meet only once a month, although 4-H does provide special enrichment programs (puppetry, double-dutch jump roping, etc.) on a weekly basis for the purpose of recruiting youngsters into the regular club structure. Moreover, some 4-H groups and other national youth service organizations conduct after-school programming in collaboration with schools. For the most part, however, the potential of these organizations to address the 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. issue is as yet untapped. And given their dependence on volunteer help, they may be endangered by the very problem that makes them a potential resource: working mothers. (Strategies to involve older teens, senior citizens, and corporate volunteers are being tried sporadically.)

A new model, more structured than hotlines, more consistently available than 4-H and Scouts, but requiring less commitment from youngsters who are not "joiners," has been tested by the Fairfax, Virginia, County Office for Children. Beginning in October 1982, the Administration for Children, Youth, and Families supported a two-year demonstration project, at a cost of $125,000, to design and test a family day-care program for older school-age children. The Family Day Care Check-In Project allows young people to spend time in their homes, take part in community activities, and play with friends under the supervision of trained family day-care providers. The two project test sites, the Reston Children's Center's Senior Satellite Program and the KIDS Check-In Club of Springfield (operated by the Potomac Area Camp Fire Council), both continuing beyond the pilot project, together serve about 30 children, primarily between the ages of 11 and 13. During the test phase, parents paid $1 an hour for the service.

Meeting young adolescents' need for flexible care attuned to their varying maturity levels, the check-in programs assign the youngsters to a neighborhood-based family day-care provider. Activities are defined by a contract among the youngster, the parent, and the service provider. Parents designate the levels of freedom and responsibility they want their children to have. According to McKnight and Shelsby (1984), "For children and parents, the use of contracts has a particular advantage: It requires parents and children to sit down and develop day care plans that address both parental concerns about safety and supervision and young adolescent desires for freedom and responsibility" (p. 24). In Reston, for example, youngsters take the school bus to the check-in home, have a snack, and then engage in activities at the home, in the community, or at their own homes (regularly phoning the family day-care provider), based on the contract. This model acknowledges that the after-school day-care needs of upper elementary and junior high-aged children are different from those of younger children. At the same time, young adolescents still benefit from responsible and flexible adult decision making and contact.

Some young adolescents are in day-care centers. A national profile of day-care centers in 1977 reported that 13,341 youngsters aged 10 and over were in centers (Coelen, Glantz, & Calore, 1979). New York City's Agency for Child Development, which mandates child care ratios of 1:10 for young school-age children, allows a ratio of 1:15 for youngsters 11 and over. Approximately one-quarter of the population served are between the ages of 10 to 14. (Elaine Collins, Agency for Child Development, telephone conversation, March 5, 1984) An example of a center licensed and partially supported by the agency is the Harbor

School-Age Center, a multipurpose program offering academic enrichment, arts, counseling, recreation, and career education to 190 6- to 14-year-olds, 90 of whom are young adolescents. This municipally funded center is open from 2:30 to 6:30 p.m., on weekdays and from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. during school holidays and the summer. Fees are set on a sliding scale ranging from $1 to $35 per week. Another day-care model is located in California's San Gabriel Valley, where a five-city network of 40 family day-care homes provides after-school care for 5- to 13-year-olds (the state no longer pays for 14-year-olds) on a sliding fee scale. A monthly training meeting is held for providers, who were initially reluctant to take in young adolescents because they did not know what to do with them. The San Gabriel Valley Resource and Referral Agency provides the training, thanks to state funding. While this program at present probably serves no more than 25 10- to 13-year-olds, it is a viable model for after-school care. (Cliff Marcusen, Options, Alhambra, California, telephone conversation, July 18, 1984; updated August 14, 1985)

A building-based model on a much grander scale is typified by Boys Clubs of America (1981). In 1980, 1,000 Boys Clubs in 50 states, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands served over one million youths, drawing on the services of 3,200 full-time staff, 4,800 part-time staff, and 55,000 volunteer adult staff. Total operating budgets reached $110 million, supported by public, foundation, and corporate grants. A comprehensive study conducted in 1979 drew the following profile of club members: 13 percent came from families with annual incomes under $4,000, 31 percent between $4,000 and $8,000, 31 percent between $8,000 and $12,000, 17 percent between $12,000 and $18,000, and 7 percent over $18,000. Forty-six percent came from single-parent families, 30 percent came from families receiving public assistance, and 41 percent came from families with parents working in blue-collar or factory jobs; 62.6 percent lived in large and medium-sized cities. The highest percentage of club members were young adolescents: 8 percent of the membership were 7 years old or under, 30 percent between 8 and 10 years old, 34 percent between 11 and 13, and 27 percent 14 or older.

Boys Clubs of America (1981) defines as "core services" activities grouped around program areas like personal adjustment, citizenship and leadership development, cultural enrichment, health and physical education, social recreation, and environmental education. Integral to Boys Clubs is a building-centered program, providing a home base that can serve both as a supplement and an alternative to family and street life. Club facilities usually include a gymnasium or playground, at least one game room, a library, meeting rooms, a craft shop, showers and dressing rooms, and sometimes kitchen facilities, a swimming pool, and health examination rooms. The organization emphasizes its youth development work with

> all boys, many of whom have problems and often are unfortunately labeled disadvantaged, neglected, abused, disturbed, retarded, hungry, fatherless, emotionally deprived, abandoned, school dropouts or kickouts, drug or alcohol abusers, incorrigible or other designations. All of these boys are in need. The Boys Clubs does not see them as "problem boys," although they may create some problems for others in the community. They really are "boys with problems." (p. I-5)

By offering an environment stressing belonging, group unity, personal values, and constructive work attitudes, the clubs attempt to give young people a chance to develop their potential: thus, the emphasis on the term, "youth development." For example, boys read, box, tutor others, go camping, visit museums, put on plays, and compete in a national photography program sponsored by the Eastman Kodak Company. They also receive behavioral counseling, academic remediation, job placement services, medical screening, and more (or less), depending on the club.

The same opportunities are available to girls through Girls Clubs of America, another building-based model, with the added emphasis of advocacy and program definition geared to empowering girls to be what they might never have dreamed they could be, simply because they are female.

Increased pressure is being placed on public school systems either to open their facilities to after-school programs on a leasing basis or to establish school-operated extended-day programs. Schools are also being asked to be more active than a traditional lessor, but less involved than the operators of programs, by providing financial or in-kind assistance to community-based programs in the form of transportation services, custodial services, utilities, opportunities to purchase equipment and supplies along with the schools' bulk orders, or instructional materials (Cohen, 1984; Hatch, 1983). Of the 171 programs in 33 states interviewed by the School-Age Child Care Project in 1979, approximately 50 percent were classified as public school "partnerships." For instance, 65 percent of the programs received substantial in-kind donations of space and utilities from the schools; slightly fewer than 50 percent received custodial services. (Seligson, Genser, Gannett, & Gray, 1983)

Some states have passed Community Schools Acts that greatly facilitate the use of public school facilities in the out-of-school hours. Nonetheless, according to the U.S. House Select Committee on Children, Youth, and Families (1984b), only slightly more than 100 of the 15,000 public school systems nationwide provide some sort of school-age child care. The Select Committee reports that "services are especially limited for children aged 11-14 who might desire, or have parents who would prefer, some type of organized after-school supervision" (p. 29).

Some counties have begun to address the issue. For instance, the Dade County, Florida, school board has run after-school programs since 1982 for 5- to 12-year-olds, sometimes by contracting with the YMCA and YWCA. While most of these elementary school programs stop at the sixth grade, they provide an indication of the need that could be met if the programs were extended upward in age. Over 7,000 children attend these after-school programs (John Pittman, Office of Vocational, Adult and Community Education, telephone conversation, July 5, 1984). In metropolitan Fort Worth, Texas, 30 of the 69 Fort Worth Independent School District's elementary schools have school-age child-care programs, again an indication of the rapid growth of school-based child care at the elementary level and a model for others who wish to extend the age limit.

Corporate-sector responses to the need for after-school care are growing, although they remain minute for parents of young adolescents. Again, initiatives begun for younger children suggest directions that might be followed for older children. A recent Harris Poll reported that 67 percent of corporate human resource executives expect to be providing child-care benefits or services in the

next few years (United Way of Los Angeles, 1984). Increasing numbers of corporations are helping employees find and pay for child care, both as a lure for recruitment and as a strategy for retaining a stable work force. A study conducted by Renee Magid (1983) for the American Management Association found that more than half the 204 firms polled had implemented their programs in the past five years in order to gain a competitive recruiting edge. But the U.S. House Select Committee on Children, Youth, and Families (1984b) refers to employers as "an almost untapped resource." Of the 6,000,000 employers in the United States, only 1,500 provide any form of child-care assistance to their employees (p. viii). An employer's active role usually depends on a range of child-care services already in place in the community (pp. 57-58).

Strategies that can apply to young adolescents include voucher systems, which subsidize employees for child-care expenses; vendor programs, in which corporations purchase child-care slots from community programs and offer them without cost or at reduced rates to employees; released time for volunteering, and direct support of community programs (Magid, 1983). For instance, the Rheedlen Truancy Prevention Program in New York City is staffed in part by 50 volunteers, some of whom are corporate employees on released time contributed by their employers. Direct corporate support is exemplified by the East Oakland Youth Development Center, which provides job skills development, recreation, basic-skills tutoring, counseling, and the arts to primarily black, Hispanic, and Asian youths in East Oakland, California. Spearheaded by the Clorox Company, the 20,000-square-foot center was built in 1978 and now has a membership of over 1,000 youths, aged 10 to 21. Clorox contributed over $247,000 toward the center's construction and pledged $50,000 annually for program operation. Since the center opened, over 70 corporations have joined Clorox in its support. In 1983, Clorox began planning an endowment drive for the center, seeking contributions to match the company's endowment gift of $1.5 million in order to stabilize the center's funding base. This corporate effort may be unique in its focus on developing a safe, enriching environment for adolescents in the after-school hours. (Lefstein & Lipsitz, 1983)

Corporate-sector support for school-age child care is small but growing, especially in large metropolitan centers in the Northeast and North Central United States. Initiatives are no longer directed solely at low-paid blue-collar workers, but increasingly at professionals, managers, technicians, and service workers (Magid, 1983). We can expect to see these models grow, especially voucher and vendor programs. Whether they will be made available to parents of young adolescents is an open question.

An entrepreneurial model that bears watching is run by SRG Associates in Acton, Massachusetts, for seventh and eighth graders, who may enroll in "The Connection" for a 12-week term, two to five afternoons per week. SRG is a for-profit company that markets after-school program packages designed specifically for young adolescents. "The Creative Connection" component includes television production, theater, puppetry, storytelling, and calligraphy. "The Sports Connection" includes open gym, karate, and other sports. "The Business Connection" includes unpaid apprenticeships in local businesses and professional offices, where youngsters learn how to run a snack bar and computer programming. (Through the Connection Computer Company, all members share in the profits accrued from designing and selling custom-made software to

elementary schools.) "The Personal Connection" provides a lounge area with games and snacks for unstructured socializing.

In Acton, SRG Associates entered into an agreement with the Acton-Boxboro Community Education Department for the provision of this fully developed package, which includes staff and supplies, in return for donated school space. Tuition is based on the number of days per week attended and the program component selected. Prepayment plans usually average around $2 an hour. A 12-week term, attended four times a week, can cost between $180 and $192; three days a week, between $140 and $150; and two days a week between $95 and $105. While these fees are out of reach for many parents, they are considerably lower than the cost of private instruction (e.g., arts and athletic lessons), which La Belle and Carroll (1982) found averaged $12.62 an hour in Los Angeles in 1982. We can assume that access to most proprietary, nonformal education will be restricted by cost primarily to middle-class and upper-class young adolescents.

When identifying and documenting high quality after-school programs for young adolescents, the Center for Early Adolescence developed a set of guidelines that cut across these models (Lefstein & Lipsitz, 1983). Rather than defining a particular delivery system, Center staff developed a prescriptive framework of criteria for selecting after-school programs for young adolescents. The framework combines responsiveness both to parental concerns and to characteristics of early adolescent development. Thus, the criteria require that a program be safe, supervised, clean, and caring; have a clearly defined mission; be responsive to its local community; and meet at least once weekly in the after-school hours. In addition, it must meet at least four of seven key developmental requirements for the age group: diversity, self-exploration and definition, meaningful participation, physical activity, competence and achievement, positive interaction with peers and adults, and structure and clear limits.

The framework outlined above represents minimal, non-negotiable requirements in the Center's criteria. In addition, negotiable criteria are that a program be physically and financially accessible, include parent participation, have a means of assessing the results of its work, provide in-service training to staff, not overlap with other local organizations, seek interagency collaboration, and demonstrate longevity in the community. Under ideal circumstances, all criteria would be met.

Of the 50 programs across the United States visited by Center staff, 24 met most or all of the criteria in the framework (Lefstein & Lipsitz, 1983). As the various models discussed in this section are debated and, perhaps, developed to address the needs of parents and their early adolescent children, this framework can serve as a challenge to parents, youth workers, and policymakers committed to promoting the healthy development of young adolescents.

Funding and Costs

The funding sources and costs of after-school programs vary so widely that no generalized statement can stand unchallenged. A low-cost model could be a small church-based program, supported in part by the congregation, in part by fees, and mostly by in-kind contributions from the church. For instance, a weekly program

at the Kenton Presbyterian Church in Portland, Oregon, cost about $300 per year. Fees were $1 per day to cover dinner, the physical plant was the church itself, the staff was composed of volunteers, and the director's time was contributed by his employer. On the other hand, Girls Club of Rapid City, which provides a comprehensive program of arts, academic enrichment, after-school day care, career education, counseling, and recreation, has an annual budget of over $400,000 and a program cost per child of $300 to $500 annually, but a membership fee of only $12 a year. Major sources of funding have included the South Dakota Department of Social Services, Child and Adult Nutritional Services, and Department of Health's Division of Alcohol and Drugs; the Bush Foundation; United Way; Mountain Plains Youth Services Coalition; Pennington County; payments from the clientele of a club-run day-care center; and fund-raising events.

An unusual source of funding has been secured by the Derby (Kansas) Community Education Program, which serves 2,000 of the community's 15,000 residents, about 25 percent of whom are young adolescents. The major source of funding, aside from participant fees, is a mill levy resulting from a successful community education referendum. "Levels," an arts, academic enrichment, and recreation program headquartered in the Great Neck (New York) Library, receives its funding from a library appropriation drawn from local taxation. The annual cost of operating Levels is approximately $75,000 to $80,000, which covers salaries and supplies. Other costs are subsumed under the library budget. All funds, aside from activity fees, are voted on by the electorate simultaneously with the local schools' budget.

The Harbor School-Age Center receives major funding from New York City's Agency for Child Development, as well as from foundations, corporations, federal and state sources, private donors, and fund-raising events. Harbor's annual budget is $300,000, and its cost per child $1,765 (youngsters attend Monday through Friday from 2:30 to 6:30 p.m. on school days, and from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on school holidays and during the summer), but its fees are only $1 to $35 per week, based on ability to pay. Major sources of funding for the Boys Club of Toledo are the United Way, contributions, and endowment investment income. Thus, while the program's cost per child is approximately $127 per year, fees are $1 per year.

The Upstairs, in Ames, Iowa (Story County), has a mandate to prevent substance abuse. In practice, the program involves young people in the arts, community service, career education, and recreation; it also provides counseling, which emphasizes positive youth development and access to desirable social roles. Major funding sources are the Iowa Department of Substance Abuse, Story County Board of Supervisors, Ames City Council, Story County Youth Probation Office, United Way of Ames/Gilbert, Iowa Arts Council, and fund-raising events. Because of this funding package, fees for The Upstairs' Media Arts Workshop are $20 annually and waivable. (All program information in this section is from Lefstein & Lipsitz, 1983.)

The lesson to be learned from this rapid overview is that high levels of energy and ingenuity are required to fund after-school programs for young adolescents. Program directors must know their locale well. For instance, Montgomery County, Maryland, schools have set priorities for per-square-foot rents charged to programs. Priority 1 users (programs operated by the school system) pay no fees;

Priority 2 users (mostly publicly supported day-care centers) pay only utilities, janitorial, and administrative costs; Priority 6 users (private enterprise) pay in all seven categories of fixed costs: utilities, janitorial service, building security, trash removal, administration, building maintenance, and outstanding debt to the community. Since most school systems have not set such clear policies favorable to after-school programs, housing a program in a public school building may devour the program's budget. Similarly, allowable exclusions for special categories of services vary from state to state. Funding for transportation can create program access otherwise denied to many young people, yet the exclusion of transportation as an allowable cost prohibits programs in many states from serving certain youngsters (Seligson et al., 1983)--for instance, the physically handicapped or those living in dangerous neighborhoods.

Feeding young adolescents has become problematic for after-school programs. The intent of Section 17 of the National School Lunch Act (Food and Nutrition Service, Department of Agriculture) is to assist states "to maintain or expand nonprofit food service programs for children in public and private nonprofit non-residential institutions providing child-care and private for-profit centers that receive compensation under Title XX for at least 25 percent of the children who are enrolled in non-residential day-care services" ("Child Care Food Program," n.d., section 10.558, p. 56). Recipients include day-care centers, settlement houses, recreation centers, and many of the programs mentioned in this section. In 1983, these nutritional services were cut back from serving all children under 18 to serving children aged 12 years or younger, unless migrant or handicapped. Thus, programs serving 13- or 14-year-olds are not eligible for federal subsidies to cover their food costs. Aside from its nutritional impact on rapidly growing young adolescents, the policy creates a considerable barrier to service providers attempting to run high quality programs for young adolescents in the after-school hours.

The comprehensive programs, like Girls Clubs of America (1984), patch funding together from United Way, fees on a sliding scale, volunteer services, private donations, slots paid for by departments of social services, Title XX funds, rental by other agencies, and nutritional supplements. Each funding cut sets up one more access barrier. In addition, each cut prevents programs from rectifying the largest subsidy of all: the extremely low salaries paid to staff. (Seligson et al., 1983) Finally, each cut requires either greater ingenuity in fund-raising or the simpler measure of raising fees, increasing the number of income-segregated after-school programs.

Program Outcomes

Working with extremely tight budgets, service providers choose increased service over program evaluation, trusting to their day-to-day experiences with youngsters to shape program and administrative decisions. This approach is confirmed by Richard L. Murphy, director of the Rheedlen Foundation, which leases space in a junior high school to run Center 54, an after-school program for adolescents. In response to a request from the Center for Early Adolescence for outcome data, he wrote, "Regarding your question on evaluation statistics from Center 54, I am afraid I really do not have what you want. The enclosed one-

page letter on reading scores was the first step in trying to do this. Unfortunately, we could not complete this; it was a choice of maintaining level of services or talking about what we used to do. In New York City, research is much more expensive than programs" (letter, June 13, 1984).

Very little is known about the contribution that nonformal education makes to young people's school achievement, future employment, skills, attitudes, or behavior. The literature is replete with articles by authors who "feel" that increases in antisocial and personally destructive behavior "may" be attributed "in part" to lack of adult supervision and "claim" or "suggest" that organized programs will decrease this behavior. A search of the ERIC data base uncovers few studies on after-school programs, center care, and day care that attend to outcomes. Among these few, a large percentage measure outcomes only by attendance rates and testimonials; others show that programs fail to meet objectives because of cuts in funding or "data collection problems" that prevent assessment of student achievement.

The lack of data on program outcomes was noted at the First National Conference on Latchkey Children, held in Boston in 1984. According to Barbara Entwistle, a sociologist at Dartmouth College, "There is not too much to tell you about, to tell the truth." In part, Entwistle reported, the problem is conceptual: "We have a very fuzzy idea about what we are trying to counteract in these programs." For instance, if the aim of an after-school program is to substitute for parents and mitigate the ill effects of their absence on child development, the outcome to be measured is the lack of ill effects. If the aim is to enhance development, we must look at positive effects in areas like achievement and attitudes. Overlooked in both these approaches are the potentially beneficial effects of after-school programs on families and the workplace, like reducing parental guilt, increasing work satisfaction, and reducing downtime on the job caused by the "3:00 syndrome." Entwistle's observations highlight the infancy of evaluative research in this field. (Quotations from author's notes)

Kleinfeld and Shinkwin (1984) trenchantly observe that the large national youth organizations are

> an oddly overlooked educational system. . . . Educators studying a tribal culture would be intrigued by a set of educational institutions outside the formal educational system, aimed at adolescents just passing into puberty, celebrating the core values of the society with oaths and rituals, and featuring exotic uniforms, badges, and insignia. Little research, however, has been done on American youth groups. (p. 21)

As these authors remind us, the report of the President's Science Advisory Committee, entitled *Youth: Transition to Adulthood* (1974), the most influential of the school reform studies of the 1970s, recommended supplementing formal schooling with socialization in out-of-school educational environments to increase youths' contact with a variety of adults, to give youths opportunities to assume responsible roles, and to provide them with opportunities to work cooperatively with others (Kleinfeld & Shinkwin, 1982). We lack understanding about the accomplishments and failures of nonformal educational settings. As a result, we

lack a research base from which to recommend improvements and alternatives to increase their potential contribution to young people's learning and socialization.

The few studies currently available do suggest various positive effects of community-based, after-school programs for young adolescents in four general areas: skills acquisition, delinquency prevention, youth employment, and academic achievement.

Skills Acquisition

Several evaluation studies indicate that after-school programs increase young people's practical skills--for instance, in first aid gardening, photography, tailoring, cooking, and automobile repair (Kleinfeld & Shinkwin, 1984; U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1980). In studying well-functioning scouting and 4-H groups, Kleinfeld and Shinkwin (1982) found that, in addition to teaching practical skills, these groups provide increased contact with civic-minded adults who model community-oriented behavior; give young people practice in formal leadership and other organizational roles, as well as opportunities to practice community responsibility; and increase family involvement in the education of adolescents. Parents, who report they are too busy to do much teaching, appreciate the skills their children learn in after-school programs. In particular, they regard "teaching the importance of helping the community as a major benefit of youth groups and an area where the youth group was far more effective than school" (Kleinfeld & Shinkwin, 1984, p. 25). Parents also see the emphasis on leadership skills as a major benefit of youth organizations and an area in which schools are relatively ineffective because they emphasize passive and dependent roles.

Kleinfeld and Shinkwin (1984) make an important observation about these testimonials, which "do not demonstrate that the educational effects have occurred. They demonstrate only that young people and their parents believe educational effects have occurred":

> The organizational ideology appeared to be providing a set of concepts participants were using to *interpret* the *meaning* of the youth group experience. . . . The ideology appeared to function cognitively as an "advance organizer": it helped define the nature of the experience. The organizational ideology, we suspect, makes such concepts as responsibility of leadership salient to young people. The concepts become part of their equipment, part of the way they assess the world. (p. 27)

This observation suggests a highly important cognitive and social effect that cries out for further study.

A national evaluation for 4-H documented the acquisition of knowledge and practical skills. In particular, the evaluators called attention to a category of knowledge that is not often emphasized in formal education: rational decision making (U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1980).

An evaluation of the Education for Parenthood programs (Behavior Associates, n.d.) delivered by the national voluntary organizations concluded that EFP was

more successful in building skills and conferring knowledge than in affecting attitudes about children and parenthood. EFP evaluators found that "teenagers, in general, have an extremely low level of knowledge about prenatal care, infant development, children and family life in general, and human sexual behavior" (p. 12). However, participants in EFP programs, in contrast to control groups, showed small but statistically significant gains in these areas.

Perhaps equally important, the evaluators concluded that the national voluntary organizations (NVOs) "were capable of planning, developing, and implementing a variety of EFP programs, which resulted in statistically significant positive changes in parenting knowledge, attitudes, and behavioral skills of teenage participants. The NVOs were able to reach and motivate large numbers of teenagers to participate voluntarily in EFP programs. EFP met an important need." (Behavior Associates, n.d., pp. 17-18) Thus, a noteworthy outcome of the EFP effort was the finding that after-school programs can be vehicles for translating public policy into educational programs.

Delinquency Prevention

Surprisingly few studies have been conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of after-school programs in preventing delinquency--given the scope of the problem and the intensity of federal, state, and municipal concern. The sparse data available support the argument that such programs can have a positive impact. In 1971 the California Council on Criminal Justice (Gee, 1974) funded a three-year community program in eight Sunnyvale schools that offered recreation, teen drop-in centers, youth employment projects, and adult education. Its purpose was twofold: to involve the community in the prevention of juvenile delinquency, vandalism, truancy, and suspensions; and to divert problem youths from the juvenile justice system. Project evaluators found significant decreases in vandalism, recidivism referrals, referrals to juvenile probation, truancy, suspensions, and school violence.

Another after-school intervention project in the early 1970s, Project BEAM (Behavioral Evolvement through Achievement Management), focused on reducing the delinquency of minority seventh and eighth graders with reading and behavioral problems (Bradfield, Hilliard, Palmer, Jones, Wofford, & Gray, 1975). The project's three thrusts--intensive reading tutorials, human relations counseling, and cultural enrichment--were to provide predelinquent and delinquent young adolescents in San Francisco's ghettos with alternatives to behavior that brought them to the attention of school authorities and law enforcement agencies. Evaluators reported improved reading ability, reduced numbers of participants on probation, and improved teachers' assessments of students' attitudes and behavior. The results were achieved primarily through the efforts of same-race college students who staffed the project.

The National Project on Juvenile Justice (Badger, 1981) was begun in 1978 at nine demonstration Boys Club sites. Funded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the project served 6,000 youths directly. An independent evaluation found that the program successfully recruited hard-to-reach and hard-to-serve boys, using a multi-service approach. Among the effective projects were community service programs, wilderness challenges, supervised work experiences,

and community crime prevention efforts planned by the boys. Most successful was peer teaching of leadership skills. According to the evaluation, the impact of the program was felt at each site in reduced juvenile crime. After one year, juvenile arrest rates were reduced by 16 percent, after three years by 31 percent. Boys Clubs of America computed that in one year 1,647 arrests were prevented, saving the taxpayers over $3 million.

In an intensive study of one site, the Boys Club of Omaha, evaluators (Sontag, n.d.) found that Project YESS (Youth Employment Skills and Services) recruited 536 young people into the training and community service program, had excellent holding power, and reduced delinquency rates during the program's duration. After the two-year program ended, negative indicators tended to increase but remained below their pre-project levels. The evaluation report concludes, "There is some evidence that the extent of participation (number of programs engaged in and length of time) in the program, was positively related to outcome. Further research is necessary to ascertain the type of program that provides the best return of the dollar and effort. . . . [The] greatest impact is felt while [the program has] contact with the youth" (p. 17).

An earlier Boys Clubs study (Boys Clubs of America, 1981) asked a simple question: Does the establishment of a club reduce delinquency rates in that neighborhood? Dan Dobson, a sociologist at New York University who studied the effect on the rate of delinquency when the Red Shield Boys Club of Louisville, Kentucky, was established, found a causal relationship between the presence of the new club and a drop in the high delinquency rate in the area served by the club. The study covered the period from 1946, when the club started with 600 members, to 1954, when memberships reached 1,700. The delinquency rate decreased from 1 in 19 in 1946 to 1 in 39 in 1954, in contrast to an increase in Louisville as a whole from 1 in 29 in 1946 to 1 in 18 in 1954--a 51.9 percent decrease in the Boys Club area and a 61 percent increase in Louisville as a whole. During these years, there was no appreciable socioeconomic change in the areas studied, nor were there any other major youth-serving programs in the Red Shield area. This study confirms for many police and court officials what they conclude from day-to-day experience: that Boys Clubs contribute to the reduction of delinquency in their neighborhoods.

The Girls Club of Rapid City, South Dakota, operated a Juvenile Diversion Project, in which therapy was provided to the families of adjudicated girls referred by the courts. An evaluation by the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration revealed a 95 percent nonrecidivist rate during the project's first two years. (Lefstein & Lipsitz, 1983)

A national evaluation of 4-H programs (U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1980) found, through an examination of census tract data, that juvenile offenses declined significantly in areas of Detroit served by 4-H programs. According to the evaluator, "The fact that this impact was recognized and attributed to 4-H by local police and community officials gives added weight to similar impacts that often have been claimed, but rarely documented, by 4-H leaders" (p. 120).

While the national programs may periodically garner the financial resources to support an outside evaluator, local programs rarely can. The Upstairs, in Ames, Iowa, studied the impact of its Media Arts Program on drug abuse prevention.

The study found decreases in participants' drug usage and in their interaction with the juvenile justice system. As Alvera Stern, former director of The Upstairs, candidly says, this is not a "clean" study. Because of the lack of good data on the outcomes of community-based programs, she has sought $300,000 for a well-designed evaluation. (Telephone conversation, July 23, 1984) Program directors like Stern in Iowa and Richard Murphy (Rheedlen Foundation) in New York must go it alone, using their common sense, experience, and intuition. A search conducted by the National Criminal Justice Reference Service for the Center for Early Adolescence, using the indicators "youth," "after-school programs," and "evaluation" for 1970 to 1984, found 29 studies and reports, many of which had no outcome measures at all.

Even the large organizations have difficulty organizing data collection and subsequent evaluations. For instance, a three-year National Health Project, funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the J. M. Foundation, provided comprehensive medical examinations and follow-up for the members of five Boys Clubs. "Health advocates" or "medical big brothers" were assigned to individual cases, and preventive health education was emphasized in programming. For complex reasons involving the clubs and the evaluator, the evaluation of this potentially pace-setting health-delivery model, which terminated in 1981, was not completed. As a result, the project lost whatever long-range impact it might have had.

Youth Employment

Youth employment is one area in which federal funds have supported evaluations. While youth employment projects typically work with older adolescents, their outcomes indicate the effectiveness of major federal initiatives in youth organizations and the potential for similar success with younger adolescents.

The JIFFY (Jobs in the Future for You) program of the Girls Club of Memphis, Tennessee, assists minority, low-income girls aged 15 to 19 to become employable by supplementing the skills training of the schools, providing counseling and referral to prevent school dropouts, and providing job training experience and work references for the future. At an annual cost of $16,000, supported by community action funds and Girls Clubs of America, JIFFY initially served approximately 200 girls a year. Between 1970 and 1978, it served over 1,500. Follow-up studies at two-year intervals indicate that 85 percent of participants who complete the program continue to make progress in work and/or in school. (National Collaboration, 1979)

"Project Touch," a youth employment program of Sioux Falls, South Dakota's Girls Club, worked to increase the employability of 14- to 21-year-olds, at a cost of $22,326. Of the 35 girls, all of whom were high school dropouts, 80 percent became involved in an educational program and 72 percent (25 girls) were positively terminated from the program, that is, found employment or educational opportunities. (Oliver-Durrah, 1982) As a result of a 4-H project in Los Cruces, New Mexico, designed to employ youths aged 14 years and older from 1973 to 1976, 1,000 participants received work experience and over $250,000 in wages (National Collaboration, 1979).

A YMCA Youth Employment Training Program in Norfolk, Virginia, organized 14- to 19-year-olds into Community Improvement Teams to identify and carry out neighborhood projects before assuming full-time employment. The program also conducted counseling sessions to promote personal growth and leadership skills. Half of the participants secured unsubsidized employment after completing the program. All of the participants remained in school. The program ran for one year (1978-79), served 120 young people at a cost of $285,000, and then lost its CETA funding. (National Collaboration, 1979)

While their studies need replication, these and other national youth-serving organizations have established a track record in the area of youth employment. It is arguable that, given resources and public commitment, they could serve younger adolescents equally effectively in areas other than employment. It is also important that young adolescents, who begin to feel increasingly concerned about their future, can look at the experiences of older club members and anticipate adult guidance and help in securing job skills and work. The impact of youth employment programs for older adolescents on the attitudes and behaviors of younger adolescents has not been studied. The outcomes of such investigations might be of considerable interest.

Academic Achievement

Given the number of programs providing tutoring and academic enrichment, the dearth of information on outcomes is startling. The few studies available suggest that after-school programs have a positive impact on younger children's academic achievement (Entwistle, 1975; Mayesky, 1980; Woods, 1972). During personal interviews, teachers and service providers have testified to the effectiveness of some after-school programs in improving academic performance. For instance, teachers in the program's catchment area recommended that certain students attend the Harbor School-Age Center in New York City's East Harlem. Staff members at Harbor said they know the participants' grades and test scores improve, but the schools get credit for the improvement. The interaction of school, center, and family remains unstudied.

A hint of what might be found can be seen in Eckert's study (1983) of In-School Scouting, an outreach program of Boy Scouts of America for inner-city children in neighborhoods where traditional after-school volunteer leadership is not available. A specially designed in-school program for boys and girls in grades 3-6 in four Los Angeles elementary schools was staffed by trained and supervised college students. The program sought to strengthen academic skills, introduce the students to citizenship training and values education, provide them with outdoor experiences, and foster Scouting. Teachers reported improved reading ability in their classes, improved overall classroom attendance, and improved school attendance on Scouting days, the last ranging from an increase of 2.2 percent to 8.06 percent in the four schools.

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Searching for studies of program outcomes is frustrating. Hundreds of thousands of public dollars have been spent on categorical programs. At this point, it is not possible to specify common features in apparently successful

programs. We have lost opportunities to learn what works, with whom, and under what conditions in areas of deep public concern--juvenile crime, adolescent pregnancy, illiteracy, and school dropouts, to name but a few. Perhaps the work of the New York State Council on Children and Families will stimulate further evaluation in these areas. The council is conducting the Preventive Services Agency Analysis, a design for analyzing the results of prevention efforts. The evaluation model includes outcomes of services in eight prevention domains, including family dysfunction, teenage pregnancy, and juvenile delinquency. Attention is being paid to "enabling outcomes"--that is, intermediate objectives that are thought to lead to successful prevention, including increased knowledge, heightened self-esteem, and improved parent-child relations. Also examined are cost estimates and measures of client satisfaction. The model has been tested at 25 sites. The council is working with New York agencies willing to adopt the instrument in the hopes that comparable data will be available in the future. That this laborious effort is unique is testimony to the paucity of data and the poor quality of data available on program outcomes. (Telephone conversation with René Grosser, Research Scientist, June 15, 1984, and Lorraine Noval, Director of Research and Information Services, November 7, 1985)

In this state of affairs, three points should not be missed. First, Kleinfeld and Shinkwin's finding (1984) that youth organizations help shape young people's expectations, experiences, and interpretations suggests that after-school programs for young adolescents can promote healthy development as well as limiting risk factors. Second, after-school programs provide opportunities that many young people would not otherwise experience. While we know little about the results of these opportunities for participation, several studies and years of experience lend support to their importance. Third, after-school programs reduce risk to young people simply by keeping them off the streets, a limited but not inconsiderable accomplishment.

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Community-based after-school programs, replete with history and short on demonstrable outcomes, function in a political climate that is usually invisible to their clients. Alternately supportive and oppressive to program directors, public-sector policies have funded, guided, and restricted the goals and activities of the programs. In some cases, these policies have blindly determined the survival or demise of mediocre and brilliant programs alike. Currently, public-sector policies are at cross-purposes. Funds are being cut back while initiatives are being introduced for the expansion of after-school programs for young adolescents. Attempts by the public sector to respond to child-care needs, and their impact on the 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. issue, are reviewed in the next chapter.

Chapter 3

A Topographical Map of Public-Sector Policies

The 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. issue is not new. During World War II when mothers were needed in the labor force, especially in the war industry, Congress passed the Lanham Act of 1942 to provide funding for child-care centers. The impetus was to facilitate the participation of women in the war effort rather than to commit the federal government to supporting child care. Likewise, the Social Security Act of 1962 established support for child care to help welfare mothers obtain jobs. The incentive was to get women off welfare, not to provide child development opportunities. (Haskins, 1980)

In 1971, Congress passed the Comprehensive Child Development Bill (Mondale-Brademas) to provide universal child care for children of all income levels up to age 15. Specifically, the bill would have established and expanded

> comprehensive child development programs, and services designed to assure the sound and coordinated development of these programs . . . with special emphasis on preschool programs for economically disadvantaged children, and for children of working mothers and single parent families, to provide that decisions be made at the community level with the full involvement of parents and other individuals and organizations in the community interested in child development and to establish the legislative framework for child development services. (S.2007)

Based on this legislation, a community could assess its needs; if it gave a high priority to services for early adolescent children of working parents, federal funds could be used to establish or expand after-school programs that were developmentally sound. Called by some the "Family Destruction Act," the bill was vetoed by President Nixon. He said, "For the Federal Government to plunge headlong financially into supporting child development would commit the vast moral authority of the National Government to the tide of communal approaches to child rearing over against the family-centered approach" (Veto Message, 1971, cited in Miller, Coulter, Schorr, & Brooks, 1983).

Miller et al. (1983) have observed that "ever since that time, arguments that the intactness of families in the United States is more threatened by neglects than by supports have not been politically persuasive" (p. 29). For instance, in 1979 Senator Alan Cranston (D-California) introduced the Child Care Act to expand and coordinate day-care programs, including school-age child care. The bill argued that without adult supervision after school, school-age children were at risk for "school vandalism, juvenile alcoholism, and serious juvenile crimes." Lacking support, the Child Care Act of 1979 was withdrawn before it came up for a vote. (Seligson, Genser, Gannett, & Gray, 1983, p. 22) On the other hand, the day-care tax credit, instituted in 1976 in place of the tax deduction, has resulted in a commitment of approximately $1.7 billion a year in support to eligible parents (U.S. House Select Committee on Children, Youth, and Families, 1984b). The first breakthrough in direct funding to programs since the Nixon veto came in 1984, in

the form of school-age child-care legislation for children aged 6 to 13. The picture, then, is anything but clear and is, in fact, in a present state of flux.

Public-sector policies at the federal, state, and municipal levels that affect after-school programs for young adolescents derive from a range of societal concerns, including providing for the children of financially dependent mothers, reducing welfare dependence, providing job training and positions for unemployed and unskilled older youth and adults, providing food supplements for poor children, and improving the quality of child care for children of working mothers. In addition, there are specific categorical patches of money for pregnancy prevention, delinquency prevention, prevention of out-of-home placements, school dropout prevention, substance abuse prevention, the promotion of voluntarism, and the like. The policies discussed in this section are those broader legislative initiatives that do not address specific categorical program areas.

According to Gwen Morgan, a child-care policy expert, child care is parents' fourth highest expense, after shelter, food, and taxes (cited in Seligson et al., 1983). For parents to afford after-school programs for their early adolescent children, affordable care must first be available for younger children in the family. Many parents need financial help if they are not to leave their young adolescents at home alone or in charge of younger siblings. Supplemental funding is available through a variety of measures that reflect social confusion, as seen in a composite picture of federal funding streams, federal and state tax policies, local school board regulations, and new state and federal school-age child-care acts.

Federal Policies

Without a comprehensive federal child-care program, funding for child care is authorized under a variety of federal laws that include Title XX, the Child Care Food Program, the Job Training Partnership Act of the Comprehensive Employment Training Act (CETA), the income disregard of Aid for Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), and the Dependent Care Tax Credit.

The largest federal program supplying funds *directly* for child care has been Title XX of the Social Security Act, now part of the Social Services Block Grant to the states. Unfortunately, much of what might be said about the effects on child care of Title XX must be conjecture because, in the words of Children's Defense Fund Director of Public Affairs Rochelle Beck (1982, p. 311), "the most fundamental accounting information is unavailable." As Beck explains, "The list of basic data left uncollected is long. Indeed, when the largest federal program supplying funds for child care--Title XX--cannot report how many children it served, one wonders how planning and evaluation, much less policy analysis, can take place" (ibid.). Helen Blank (1983), also of CDF, echoes Beck's frustrations. After conducting a study on the effects on state child-care systems of Title XX cuts from 1981 to 1983, she reported the following: "We set about discovering how states reacted to the federal Title XX cuts. But it was not easy. At the same time that the federal government made major changes in Title XX funding and policies, it cut back on the collection of data that would have helped show the effects of such far-reaching concerns" (p. 3). Because the study was unable to find data collected by ages, it is not possible to conclude whether or how children of various

ages have been differentially affected by funding cutbacks (Helen Blank, telephone conversation, June 6, 1984).

Before 1981, Title XX of the Social Security Act provided funds to states specifically to help low- and moderate-income families pay for child care (U.S. House Select Committee on Children, Youth, and Families, 1984b, p. viii). In 1981, as a result of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act, Title XX was incorporated into the Social Services Block Grant and Congress agreed to substantial (over 21 percent) cuts in Title XX requested by the Reagan Administration. The $200 million minimum that had been established for states to spend on child care only was specifically eliminated, as was a training program for social service professionals, including child-care workers (Blank, 1983, p. 1).

After 1981 the majority of states reduced their child-care services for low- and moderate-income families (U.S. House Select Committee on Children, Youth, and Families, 1984b, p. viii). Thirty-two states provided Title XX-supported child care to fewer children in 1983 than in 1981, a total combined federal and state drop of 14 percent. Free to decide what proportion of federal funds would be used on child care, and under what conditions, six states (Delaware, Indiana, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Texas) cut back on school-age child care that was previously provided through Title XX. (Blank, 1983) Three states cut back by lowering the ceiling age for eligibility: Texas, from age 14 to 10, Indiana from 12 to 10, and Pennsylvania from 14 to 12. Reduced funding in New Jersey resulted in after-school program closings. Delaware first eliminated all after-school services, then reinstated them for children through the third grade. Massachusetts raised fees, then dropped them a year later. In the interim, programs lost large numbers of children and, in some cases, closed. Changing policies bounced children in and out of various programs. (Helen Blank, telephone conversation, June 6, 1984)

This chaotic situation, while wreaking havoc on programs and families, may actually be of relative unimportance to programs for young adolescents, since few Title XX dollars have ever been targeted to after-school programs per se or to the age group. Of great import, however, is the direction of federal policy away from public support of after-school programs.

At the same time that Title XX funds were cut, three other programs that provide financial support for child care were also curtailed: the Child Care Food Program was cut 30 percent, the Public Service Employment Component of CETA was eliminated, and AFDC compensation to families for child-care costs was capped at $160 per month per child (Blank, 1983). Taken altogether, these cuts made child care costlier for parents, partly because of reduced direct support, partly because of raised program fees. Again, young adolescents were affected indirectly rather than directly, becoming part of an increasingly costly child-care equation for parents with both younger children and comparatively expendable young adolescents.

According to program directors interviewed by staff members of the Center for Early Adolescence in preparation for the publication, *3:00 to 6:00 P.M.: Programs for Young Adolescents* (Lefstein & Lipsitz, 1983), the two most direct hits were the CETA and USDA cuts. CETA helped fund staff in large centers and small programs, as well as providing program support for youth employment

projects. According to an analyst in the USDA's Nutrition Service, the change in age eligibility from 18 to 12 for USDA nutritional supplements in after-school programs resulted in a savings of only $5 million out of an FY 1983 program cost of $322 million. For programs unable to find alternate sources to feed children over 12, however, this cut forced directors to lower the age eligibility of their after-school programs to children 12 and under, whom they could feed. Some chose either not to feed the older children, allowing them to bring junk food onto the premises, to sell food to young adolescents, to solicit donations of food, or to juggle accounts to come up with funds for a nutritious snack from general operating expenses.

The only child-care support program expanded in the 1981-83 period was the Dependent Care Tax Credit, which is the largest source of indirect federal support for child care. Tax credits are provided for families with child-care costs related to employment or education. Under the tax code, a credit is available to families with children under age 15 if both parents work or are looking for work, or if one parent is a student or disabled. Single parents or divorced or separated parents who have custody of children may also claim the credit, again if the child care is tied to employment or education. In 1982, the credit was increased from 20 percent to 30 percent for taxpayers with incomes of $10,000 or less. This produced a sliding scale that reduces the credit by one percentage point for each $2,000 between $10,000 and $28,000. Maximum eligible expenses were increased to $2,400 for one dependent and $4,800 for two or more dependents.

The Joint Tax Committee reports that the tax credit provided an estimated $1.2 billion in FY 1981, $1.35 billion in 1982, $1.52 billion in 1983, and $1.765 billion in 1984. According to the U.S. House Select Committee on Children, Youth, and Families, of the 4.6 million families claiming this tax credit in 1981, 64 percent were above the median income level, whereas only 7 percent had incomes below $10,000. This major subsidy for child-care costs does not seem to benefit lower-income families and provides only limited support to lower-middle-income families. Two-thirds of the credit goes to families with incomes above the national median, who have sufficient disposable income to take advantage of it. (U.S. House Select Committee on Children, Youth, and Families, 1984b) In addition, as Beck (1982) observes, many middle-class children do not benefit from the tax credit because it "does not create, improve, or better distribute child-care services" (p. 320).

The relative inability of lower-income families to benefit from this policy raises equity questions that are as yet unresolved. Also, barely a subject of public or scholarly discussion and yet of importance to parents of young adolescents is the exclusion from any tax benefits of the parent who chooses to stay home and raise a family, but needs help with costs of after-school programs. Benefits are tied to employment.

Often mentioned in reviews of federal child-care income supports is the AFDC "income disregard mechanism." AFDC-eligible families may deduct the cost of child care, up to $150 per month, from their monthly earnings before their AFDC grant is computed. The income disregard technically is available to families with children up to age 18, but the money typically goes to support day care. While it could be helpful from a legal standpoint, it has not become an appreciable source of support for parents sending their young adolescents to after-school

programs (Madeleine Kimmick, telephone conversation, June 14, 1984; Rooney, 1983; Seligson et al., 1983).

One result of the shifts in child-care supports has been a new focus on a group of unserved families, "the approximately 11.1 million children ages birth to 13 in families earning more than the poverty level and less than $15,000 a year. They are ineligible for the vast majority of the direct service programs and they reap few of the tax credit benefits" (Beck, 1982, p. 320).

The significance of the federal funding cuts may be marginal at best for parents and service providers concerned with young adolescents. As noted earlier, the stress that results from the cuts is indirect, caused by the policies' impact on younger children. However, there is evidence of the powerful positive impact, of potential direct benefit to young adolescents, when the age group becomes a higher federal priority.

One example of the effect of such priority setting is reported by the evaluators of 4-H programs (U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1980). Under federal mandate, 4-H expanded its emphasis on urban youth through specially funded federal programs, including 4-H Special Interest Groups, the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program, and 4-H Instructional TV. Trends in urban 4-H participation changed dramatically, increasing from approximately 750,000 metropolitan participants in 1969 to a high of close to 3,250,000 in 1974. The evaluators attribute over two-thirds of that growth to the specially funded federal programs, concluding that, while the Extension Service rightly takes pride in its grassroots orientation and local program objectives, "the Federal role is strongest when policy direction is written into the law or Federal funding is earmarked for a specific purpose. Extension's Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program . . . and urban gardening programs are prime examples" (p. x). We have not seen such earmarking of expenditures recently, nor will we as the current debate about the proper role of the federal government in human services continues. Attention, rather, is focused on earmarking cuts in services.

In *Children's Services in the Reagan Era*, Madeleine Kimmick (1985) studied the effects of funding cuts on nonprofit services for children. Although she could not obtain data disaggregated by age, and we must therefore approach her findings cautiously in reference to young adolescents, Kimmick did obtain data about child-serving organizations by service category, including--among others--recreation, health and mental health, institutional/residential care, and day care. Many programs serving young adolescents in the after-school hours fall under the "recreation" category. These programs, according to Kimmick, were hit hardest by CETA cuts, both in money for staff and money for direct recreation services. Recreation agencies experienced the biggest percent of loss (11 percent) of federal dollars; but, surprisingly, they recouped and then experienced a 7 percent rate of growth, accomplished by means of raised fees, special fund-raising events, individual giving, and foundation grants. As these figures are interpreted, it should be borne in mind that recreation agencies traditionally rely heavily on nonpublic sources of funding; only 10 percent at all levels, combined, are publicly supported. Earned income is their greatest source of funds. Social service agencies (excluding day care), which also serve young adolescents in the after-school hours, lost 5 percent of their federal dollars and suffered a 3 percent real loss (adjusted for inflation) that they could not recoup.

Thus, once again the funding cuts appear to have caused an equity problem, perhaps subtly shifting programs' clientele from those in need to those who could afford raised fees, perhaps strengthening the child-serving agencies already relatively independent of public revenues and weakening the agencies serving the neediest and most dependent on public funds. In their provocative study, *The Federal Budget and the Nonprofit Sector* (1982), Salamon and Abramson predicted that the revenues of nonprofit social service organizations would be especially hard hit by reductions in CETA, the Social Services Block Grant, and community services programs. Their predictions were realized. These agencies were not able to fill the gap left by federal cutbacks, unlike other sectors that overcame the considerable and at times intense fiscal strain caused by sharp drops in federal support.

The 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. issue is one of many social service questions caught in the current conflict about the role of government in the alleviation of suffering and the enhancement of opportunities. Salamon and Abramson (1982) summarize the tension in the current policy debates embodied in the Economic Recovery Program:

> A sharp choice has been posed between two alternative paradigms for carrying out this nation's business. One paradigm embodied in the budget proposals . . . would significantly reduce the established partnership arrangements between government and nonprofit organizations and seek a sharp separation of the sectors instead. The other paradigm would build on these partnership arrangements and improve them, taking advantage in the process of the complementary advantages of the nonprofit and governmental sectors, the former in the area of service delivery and the latter in the area of funding and democratic priority setting. How this issue is resolved will shape the character of American public policy for decades to come. (pp. 65-66)

State and Federal Legislative Initiatives

At the request of Governor Mario Cuomo, the New York State Council on Children and Families prepared a policy paper on after-school programs that serve the state's kindergarten through eighth grade children, aged 5 to 13 (Hatch, 1983). The report identified several barriers to providing programs, among them the lack of clear definition regarding school-age child care among three state agencies serving segments of the population in question (the Department of Social Services [DSS], the Division for Youth [DFY], and the State Education Department); the lack of systematic information on the demand for various types of after-school programs and on the numbers and socioeconomic characteristics of those already being served; a wide range of interpretations among school districts about the extent to which schools should be used for or collaborate with these programs; and the ambiguity of regulatory standards or guidelines to govern after-school programs. According to the report,

> Because the state has not treated school-age programs as a discrete program category, no clear picture of the amount and types of

> funds flowing to school-age programs exists. Some indeterminate portion of DFY local services funds, distributed through the Youth Bureau System, are used to support community-based after-school programs. Similarly, some indeterminate portion of DSS day care funding (principally, federal Social Services Block Grant monies) administered through the social services districts, is used to reimburse providers for the care of eligible children in the 5-13 age range. In addition, there may be some costs of after-school care being absorbed through other systems, such as education. Unfortunately, however, an accurate and comprehensive fiscal analysis is lacking. (Cited in Hatch, 1983, p. 22)

In its policy paper, the New York State Council recommended many strategies for overcoming barriers to initiating programs. Ironically, one is implied in the quotation above: rather than gaining control of the situation in order to recommend funding, the state should start a discrete funding stream in order to gain control of the situation. This recommendation was implemented in July 1984, when Governor Cuomo signed initial legislation making $300,000 available in start-up funds for new after-school programs, thus helping to address the need for seed money to get programs off the ground. The maximum grant to new programs is $10,000.

Start-up funds are crucial to initiating new programs, which may already have access to operating funds through income-support programs and fees, among other resources. But, as the New York State Council cautioned, the central issue for parents is affordability:

> As the state continues to examine its policies relating to school-age child care services, one of the primary considerations must be the extent to which they ensure that families of all income categories will have access to services. Currently, the problem of finding an affordable program or caretaker for one's child after school is greater for lower and middle income families. The very poor families may be eligible for a child care subsidy through DSS and the affluent family can afford expensive care. Families in between these two extremes, however, confront a major dilemma as to what arrangements, if any, to make. Families who are just managing to meet their basic expenses may not use programs if the price is too high for them. In other words, they will be forced to take the risk of leaving their children in self-care. (Cited in Hatch, 1983, pp. 33-34)

Another recommendation made by the council pertains to state education law, which "should be amended to expressly authorize the use of school buildings and grounds for the operation of school-age child-care programs by other public or non-profit organizations" (cited in Hatch, 1983, p. 28). This amendment, while merely a "minor technical change" in a law that does not prohibit such use, endorses the inclusion of such programs in state policy and eliminates a justification some schools employ when disapproving the use of school space by outside groups for after-school programs. The measure was adopted in 1984.

In 1985, New Jersey adopted an act authorizing the establishment of school-age child-care programs in public schools for 5- to 16-year-olds before and after school hours and for extended hours during holidays and vacation periods. Ongoing oversight at the local level must be provided by a Child Care Council composed of parents, teachers, citizens, and child-care community agency representatives. Each local board of education that establishes such a council is eligible for a start-up grant up to a maximum of $50,000. This type of legislation is a lever that opens school facilities to community-based after-school programs.

In *A Manual for Public School Administrators: Legal Considerations for the Implementation of School-Age Child Care*, Abby Cohen (1984) views such legislation differently. In her opinion, it provides political and legal protection for the public schools if they operate fee-based programs themselves or lease space to outside agencies. Some states have community education statutes that pave the way for the community's use of school buildings in the out-of-school hours. Some states (Cohen mentions, among others, Tennessee, Oregon, Washington, Hawaii, Michigan, Maryland, and Massachusetts) have passed legislation specifically authorizing schools to run child-care programs and/or to lease space to organizations that do. The School-Age Child Care Project at Wellesley College, together with Cohen, has provided a model enabling statute to help states open their facilities (Cohen, 1984; Seligson et al., 1983). Endorsing, enabling, and requiring the use of school buildings for after-school programs removes a significant policy barrier to service delivery, and is one of the most frequently and successfully argued policy changes at the municipal and state levels.

Probably the most comprehensive state effort to fund after-school programs was California's "latchkey package," a set of three bills (S.B.1620, S.B.1717, S.B.1718) passed by the legislature in 1984. This legislation had bipartisan support, in response to careful data collection and public advocacy that preceded and accompanied the bills through the legislature. For instance, just before the bills were introduced, the Senate Office of Research released its study, *Who Is Watching Our Children? The Latchkey Child Phenomenon* (Rooney, 1983), which presented careful data about supply and demand. The report pointed out that, while California subsidizes a variety of child-care services, including child-care information and referral, the state is not meeting the demand for high quality, affordable care, especially for older school-age children. Actual care available for school-age children falls short of the need: "During fiscal year 1982-83, approximately 143,000 children were enrolled in child care programs that received state funds (i.e., subsidized programs). However, the majority of these spaces were reserved for infants and pre-schoolers. . . . Children over age 13 are not eligible for subsidized services" (p. 21). At the same time this study was published, the Senate Office of Research also circulated a two-page document, *Latchkey Questions and Answers* (n.d.), noting that $100 million would help upward of 50,000 children--a small dent in the latchkey problem and the financial equivalent of building one mile of the Los Angeles Century Freeway.

The three bills provided funding for program operations, capital outlay, equipment, and instructional materials. Public, nonprofit, and for-profit agencies were eligible for funding. Program enrollment priorities were given, in descending order, to (1) children at risk, (2) children in grades K-3 and their siblings, and (3) children in grades 4-9. The bills also encouraged equity for disabled children and for racial and ethnic minorities. After a district-wide assessment of after-school

needs, program components were to include age-appropriate activities, transportation if not located on a school site, extensive use of community resources, and encouragement of young people in such "traditional" after-school activities as Scouting. Staff members were required to have backgrounds in education and child development. It was widely, and correctly, assumed that, with the passage of this $200 million package, California would become the pace-setter among the states in supporting more affordable and accessible after-school programs for children and youth through grade 9. Unfortunately, Governor Deukmejian vetoed all three bills.

At the federal level, school-age child-care bills successfully made their way through the House and Senate in 1984. In a 14-day stretch of remarkable energy and momentum, the House held hearings and passed the School Facilities Child Care Act (H.R.1493). It proposed that $30 million per year for three years be allocated by the Department of Health and Human Services to public schools and community-based organizations for before- and after-school care, and that a national clearinghouse of programs be established. Senate Bill 1531 provided only $15 million a year for the three years in start-up costs, but was considered by many favoring the bill to be a "foot in the door" and a "step in the right direction." Ted Rozeboom, staff aide to Senator Donald Riegle (D-Michigan), who sponsored the bill, had said at the First National Conference on Latchkey Children (Boston, 1984), "These bills will initiate a learning process for parents, who will see programs functioning and helping children." Congressman John McKernan, Jr. (R-Maine) foresaw no simple legislative "solution" to the latchkey issue, citing H. L. Mencken: "Every complex problem has a simple solution, and it is usually wrong." At the same time, McKernan agreed with Rozeboom that the bills were very important "to blaze the trail at the federal level." (Quotations from author's notes)

The Senate version suffered the "Perils of Pauline" in the tumultuous last days of the 98th Congress, finally being attached by Senator Riegle to the Human Services Reauthorization Act (S.2565), which included extension of the Head Start Act. Senate Bill 2565, Subchapter D, "Grant to States for Planning and Development of Dependent Care Programs," called for $20 million a year for fiscal years 1985 and 1986. Forty percent was designated for planning, developing, establishing, expanding, or improving information, resource, and referral networks, 60 percent was designated for start-up and expansion funds, to contract or deliver directly school-age child-care services before and after school in public schools, private schools, or community centers. Funds were targeted to children aged 5 through 13. The bill required that states provide assurances that parents of school-age children would be involved in the development of a supported program, and that the applicant would be willing and able to seek to enroll handicapped children as well as racially, ethnically, and economically diverse school-age children. The authorization measure was signed by President Reagan, but no funding was appropriated for FY 1985. The saga of this federal initiative is ongoing and unresolved.

Licensing Regulations

State and municipal regulations have not kept up with the changing clientele of so-called "child-care" programs. Many programs that previously served only

younger children now find young adolescents refusing to "age out," continuing to attend sometimes as often as five times a week. The young adolescents are understandably less concerned about licensing regulations than are the service providers who must eject them from their programs. Elaine Collins of New York City's Agency for Child Development reports that increasing numbers of young adolescents who "grew up" in day-care centers are pressuring providers to allow them to remain in the programs. She predicts that as increasing numbers of youngsters are enrolled in day-care programs as children, increasing numbers of young adolescents will exert this pressure. (Author's notes from the First National Conference on Latchkey Children, Boston, 1984)

Regulations need to change in order to distinguish among the program, staffing, and physical plant needs of infants and toddlers, younger elementary-school-age children, and older elementary- and junior high-age youngsters. Only five states (Alaska, Michigan, New York, North Dakota, and Oregon) currently disaggregate by age for school-age child-care licensing standards. For instance, Alaska, New York, and North Dakota set regulations per age groups of 5-year-olds, 6- to 10-year-olds, and 10- to 14-year-olds. Michigan's grouping is 6 to 12 and 13 to 17 years; Oregon's is 5 to 9 and 10 to 14 years. (Seligson et al., 1983) These states set regulations of staff to child ratio and/or maximum group size based on age, an important acknowledgement of the need to provide age-appropriate services. Also, since the regulations become more lenient as children grow older, a potential barrier to the provision of services to young adolescents may be eliminated through age-specific regulations.

Other regulations serve as barriers to extending the age limit of child-care centers. For instance, Tennessee regulations make it illegal for young adolescents to volunteer in child-care agencies, thus denying them contact with adult child-care providers, denying them the opportunity to learn nurturing skills and to contribute to their communities, and denying the agencies simultaneously an increased staff and lowered child-to-staff ratio. Some cities still have a requirement, now voided in New York, that child-care workers in publicly supported programs have degrees in early childhood education. This requirement hinders centers from hiring staff members with the training and personal affinity to work with young adolescents. Seemingly intransigent teenagers burn out staff members who are prepared for and prefer to work with young children. When regulations are reviewed for their appropriateness to serving a broad age range, as occurred in New York City, publicly supported programs like the Harbor School-Age Center can qualify for support from the Agency for Child Development, hire and retain youth-oriented staff, and attract and retain early adolescent participants.

Tax Incentives

Approximately 30 states provide tax credits for parents who file for the federal child-care tax credit. In two states, the tax is refundable. (Seligson et al., 1983) Several analysts argue that a refundable credit would be attractive to individuals who do not earn enough to have a tax liability (Kersten, n.d.; Seligson et al., 1983), perhaps resulting in fewer young people being left in self-care.

Tax incentives for employers might stimulate benefit packages and program development that would give parents more options. According to Kristin Anderson, director of the Working Parents Project of the Center for Public Advocacy Research, corporations have shown considerable interest in flexible benefit programs that offer reimbursement for dependent care assistance. The Internal Revenue Service now allows companies to establish flexible spending accounts, cafeteria benefit plans, and dependent care assistance plans. However, continued uncertainty about tax reform and lack of IRS clarification about regulations governing these options have limited companies' willingness to incorporate dependent care assistance into their benefit programs. (Telephone conversation, August 20, 1985) The few companies that offer benefits for after-school care target them to younger children. Nonetheless, a mechanism may be in place for extending the age limit to young adolescents, whose parents can submit expenses for accredited after-school and vacation programs. It is here that corporate tax incentives can have an impact on the status of young adolescents in the after-school hours (see Conference Board, 1983).

Guidelines for Determining Child Neglect

One area of public policy much alluded to but rarely defined is child neglect. The word "neglect" seems to have become an appendage to "abuse," which is more readily and willingly defined.

Most states shy away from specifying in their legislation what constitutes child neglect. Its definition is established by case law and by agency regulation. According to the Tennessee Department of Human Services, for example, leaving a child under age 9 unsupervised for any length of time constitutes neglect; so does leaving a child between the ages of 10 and 12 unsupervised for more than four hours, and leaving a child under 12 responsible for one or more younger siblings for more than two hours (*The Tennessean*, 1982). The manual of Virginia's Social Services Department inadequately identifies unsupervised children as those who, in part, are under age 18 and are left alone without an adequate plan for safety; or who are responsible for siblings in a situation inappropriate to age, maturity, judgment, or physical capacity; or whose child-care arrangements place them in jeopardy of sexual abuse, drug abuse, or criminal behavior (Zomparelli, 1984).

Definitions of neglect come primarily from standards used by courts for the removal of children from their homes. "Neglect" is either not defined by state statutes and regulations or defined so broadly as potentially to include any unsupervised minor. Under these broad definitions, numerous parents of young adolescents might be accused of child neglect. In the absence of alternatives to self-care in many communities, and in view of the serious problems of financial access for many parents and of physical access and safety for young adolescents, it is perhaps best that the concept of neglect be protected from public scrutiny. It would be an unfortunate irony if the growing concern about latchkey children were to create one more guilt-producing and even punishing burden for parents whose options are foreclosed.

* * * * * *

A topographical map of public-sector policies presents more valleys than peaks, current initiatives notwithstanding. As shown in Chapter 4, the increasing number of school-age children in self-care after school has led to a multitude of diverse recommendations about remediating harm, limiting risk, and promoting the well-being of children and youth from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m.

Chapter 4

A Sampler of Recommended Public Policy Changes

The status of young adolescents in the after-school hours is a complex issue and a complex of issues, criss-crossing child-care and youth development domains, challenging reasonable assumptions about risk and need, just on the edge of current policy concerns and yet "owned" by no one. It is reasonable, then, that recommendations for public policy changes to improve the after-school status of young adolescents come from diverse sources, target different youngsters, and address a variety of audiences.

For instance, some recommendations address ways of expanding financial support to make services accessible to more low-income families. Such measures include increasing spending for school-age child care under the Human Services Block Grant; raising reimbursement rates for family day-care providers to encourage them to serve school-age children; extending the qualifications for sliding fees to include parents with incomes now just out of the eligibility range; advocating for state child-care tax credits and for tax refunds at the federal and state levels (Seligson, Genser, Gannett, & Gray, 1983); increasing appropriations for existing programs, like USDA's Child Care Food Programs, Title XX training, and P.L.94-142 (for handicapped children); and increasing the maximum tax credit allowed families with more than two dependents (Beck, 1982). The U.S. Congressional Budget Office (1984) suggests changes in federal policy that include reestablishing a child-care set-aside in the Human Services Block Grant and channeling these funds to services for low-income families.

These and other changes in the status quo propose an incremental approach to assisting low-income families, as Beck (1982) argues, "to focus more public funds for child care on families who most need assistance, instead of continuing the pattern whereby 75 percent of the tax credit benefits go to families earning over $15,000 a year" (p. 322). While targeted to younger children, these recommendations could indirectly benefit low-income families with young adolescents by changing the child-care equation--that is, freeing up money in families' budgets that could be used to pay after-school fees for their early adolescent children.

Still other recommendations expand the focus of reforms to middle-income families as well. For instance, included in a series of recommendations made by the U.S. House Select Committee on Children, Youth, and Families (1984b) to expand child-care options are sweeping tax reform measures: "Recommend immediate revision so that families raising children are not penalized whether they choose to stay home with their child or seek out-of-home care. Seek reconsideration of the personal and dependent exemption, the dependent care tax credit, the earned income tax credit, family allowances, and the dependent care assistance program" (p. xiv). In fact, at least some committee members seemed to favor a family allowance, buttressing their argument with the following evidence:

> Sixty-seven countries, including all the developed countries except the United States, provide some type of family benefit. One witness [Joseph Piccione, Child and Family Protection Institute, Washington, D.C.] suggested that both the credit and the dependent

> exemption could be replaced with a family allowance, because the credit does not adequately reach low-income families, and the exemption varies too widely, depending on gross income and adjusted tax rates. In his view, a family allowance would also better serve parents who choose not to enter the labor force. (pp. 83-84)

Recommendations from the Congressional Budget Office also attend to middle- as well as lower-income families, suggesting a voucher system for dependent care, tax incentives on loans to encourage employer-supported care, and exclusion of fringe benefits from taxation. The House Select Committee agrees that Congress should provide incentives for private employers to expand child-care options, including fringe benefit plans and information and referral services. (U.S. Congressional Budget Office, 1984)

Other recommendations focus on expanding the number and range of options. Beck (1982) says, "It is important for policies and programs to reflect the fact that there is no best child care arrangement at all times for all children. Methods of financing, delivering and monitoring child care services can either promote or inhibit diversity. Decisions regarding them should be made with the promotion of diversity in mind" (p. 315). The same need for diversity is argued for school-age child-care programs. For instance, Coolsen (1983) presses for a range of community-based solutions, because "the effects of a self-care experience vary with each child and are dependent on a number of factors, including the child's age and maturity level, access to and availability of parents, level of communication between parent and child, resources available in the neighborhood, and the degree to which the family is integrated or isolated socially" (p. 10). Thus, both because of the desirability of choice and because of the complex nature of the after-school issue itself, proposals for a broad range of available options are numerous. This is most succinctly stated in a report on school-age child care prepared by New York State's Council on Children and Families: "Parents' and children's needs for services are known to vary. The endorsement of a diversity of program types serves to maximize local option and thus is an appropriate position for the state to adopt" (cited in Hatch, 1983, p. 25).

Several recommendations point specifically to the support of after-school programs in school buildings. The U.S. House Select Committee on Children, Youth, and Families (1984b) states that "Congress should provide incentive grants to assist public and nonprofit agencies to develop before- and after-school child care programs for school-age child care, using public and private school facilities" (pp. xvii-xviii). New York State's Council suggests, among other prototype models, programs "operated by an independent agency in a public school. Control rests with the outside organization" (cited in Hatch, 1983, p. 12). The legislation of New York and California and the federal school-age child-care bill give schools incentives for offering after-school programs.

Finally, one of the most frequently argued recommendations addresses parents' need for information about available resources. For example, Seligson et al. (1983) suggest that policymakers "initiate or support child care information and referral agencies to gather data on parents' preferences and demands for school-age services, and to link parents and providers at the local level" (p. 46). New York State's Council recommends offering technical assistance to local communities so

they may assemble better data on parents' and providers' needs and resources for use as a planning and action tool (Hatch, 1983). Viewing resource and referral services as consumer education, the U.S. House Select Committee on Children, Youth, and Families (1984b) proposes that "Congress should establish a modest matching fund program designed to expand community-based information and referral services for parents, and to support networks for providers, workers and administrators of child care programs" (p. xv).

Implicit in these recommendations, as well as in numerous others not discussed here, is the need to establish a resource and referral network for programs that stop at around grade 6. In fact, all the recommendations, while applicable to young adolescents, are focused on children of elementary school age or younger. To argue for the inclusion of young adolescents is not illogical; in most of the legislation and regulations, children up to at least age 14 are included. And yet, de facto if not de jure, young adolescents are overlooked. As Rubin (1983) aptly observes:

> It is both the greatest strength and the greatest weakness of these programs [out-of-school programs for young adolescents] that they operate in the interstices of a social system, between children and families on one hand and the leviathan establishments of juvenile justice, schooling, and social welfare on the other. At their best, out-of-school programs are flexible, community-based services capable of meeting needs left unattended by families, neighborhoods, and the larger, less responsive bureaucracies. (p. 104)

Thus, the recommended policies cited above, while as appropriate for young adolescents and the programs that serve them "in the interstices" as they are for younger children, will need regulations that focus implementation on 10- to 15-year-olds specifically if the age group is to be included.

Such a focus was provided at a conference entitled "Setting Policy for Young Adolescents in the After-School Hours," sponsored by the Center for Early Adolescence (1984) and the Johnson Foundation, which was held at the Wingspread Conference Center during November 11-13, 1984. Participants representing major youth-serving organizations, local agencies, and state and federal legislative committees targeted their recommendations specifically to early adolescents.

High on the list of recommended policies was the collection and disaggregation by age of data (at the local level and nationally through the Bureau of the Census), to establish a data base about the need for and effects of after-school programs for young adolescents, to provide a clearinghouse for consumers and service providers, to create awareness about the overlooked needs of young adolescents and their parents, and to help inform local needs assessments prior to policy recommendations.

Building public awareness about the status of young adolescents after school emerged as a central theme of the conference. Participants concluded that young adolescents are overlooked in policy setting because they have become an "invisible population" for policymakers, too old for the child-care programs and too young for the employment efforts that are part of our national- and state-level policy discourse.

Participants also recommended building program guidelines for young adolescents into all model guidelines for school-age child care that follow federal and state legislation. Such guidelines would reflect the importance of providing a continuum of services in response to the continuum of development (e.g., from day-care supervision to youth development activities including educational enrichment and pre-employment programs), rather than stopping at the sixth grade or earlier.

Another issue raised at the conference was the lack of transportation for young adolescents on their own after school. For want of a van, many a program has foundered. Conferees called for federal and state subsidies to help school systems transport children and youth to after-school programs and to help programs provide direct transportation services.

Other recommendations recognized the need for youth-oriented training and staff development. Most staff development programs of the major youth-serving organizations are managerial (to build diversified incomes, public relations skills, etc.). Only a handful address young people themselves. The University of Massachusetts at Amherst offers a major in "leisure studies and resources" that has one child-oriented option. American Humanics, which conducts degree programs on 15 campuses, has graduated approximately 1,500 students in the past 35 years with a minor or concentration in youth-agency administration (Hugh, 1983-84). The University of Minnesota's Center for Youth Development offers courses in youth work through other university departments. For the most part, there is little pre-service professional training and in-service training in youth work is inadequate. In recommending the establishment and maintenance of programs for young adolescents, conferees stated that the programs should include in-service staff development components.

The most far-reaching recommendation of the conference was made in response to a challenge by Jack Calhoun, Executive Director of the National Crime Prevention Council. He suggested that advocates shift the focus of the 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. issue from "the needs of youth for services" to "the need of youth to serve." Accordingly, conferees recommended that national efforts such as ACTION, the numerous state and local service organizations, and municipal agencies lower their age limits in order to tap the positive energies of young adolescents, permitting them to serve as resources to their communities in day-care centers, senior citizen centers, hospitals, libraries, parks, museums, and programs for the handicapped.

The recommendations of the Wingspread conference reflect an awareness of the special challenges presented by the early adolescent age group, which, as one participant put it, is "on the cusp," teetering between childhood and young adulthood.

* * * * * *

The policies recommended for public action make sense--or do they? On what basis can youth workers and parents advocate for individual or sets of policies to alleviate the 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. problem and enhance young people's development in their communities? The following chapter presents a framework for evaluating the comparative strengths of selected policies in the public marketplace.

Chapter 5

Analysis of Public Policy Alternatives

> I believe that one useful approach to understanding policy is to examine recurring issues in the design of social programmes. S. M. Miller and I have tried to crystallize these by a set of dichotomies: should policies directed at social change seek fundamental or incremental reform; should universal or selective principles govern the distribution of services, or both; should social objectives be primarily directed towards equality of opportunity or equality of conditions; should policy decisions be made through a centralized, elite-dominated system or through a pluralistic, competitive system with consumer sovereignty?
>
> Rein, 1976, p. 23

Let us say that we do nothing. Increasing numbers of young adolescents are left to their own devices after school. Some value their privacy and independence. Others are bored or, worse, prone to taking risks that jeopardize their well-being and the quality of life in their communities. Some parents are satisfied with self-care, while others are deeply worried by their youngsters' lack of safety and access to enriching experiences. This status quo does not signal a national emergency. By what yardstick should the status quo or alternative policy recommendations be judged?

Valuative Criteria

Haskins (1980, pp. 10-13) suggests that the following valuative criteria can and should be considered in analyzing most social policies: vertical equity, efficiency, preference satisfaction, stigma, and feasibility. "Vertical equity" involves the redistribution of resources to benefit the poor. "Efficiency" requires that resources will be used to produce the maximum benefit. "Preference satisfaction" values the fewest possible limitations to individual choice, so that people can satisfy their own preferences. "Stigma" results from negative labeling, such as the attribution of weakness or pathology to a person's or group of persons' character. "Feasibility" denotes probability that a policy will actually be enacted and implemented. A desired policy will score low on "stigma" and high on all the others. (See also MacRae & Wilde, 1979.) Another universal criterion for policy analysis is "horizontal equity," or equal treatment for everyone.

These criteria are value-laden and difficult to apply. For instance, horizontal equity may be more desirable to some policymakers than vertical equity, which results in unequal treatment targeted to specific groups. Vertical equity may lead to greater stigma and thus be undesirable to the very population a policy is intended to serve. "Efficiency" is an economic term that demands numerical measurement of the costs and benefits of human services, often missing or minimizing human benefits that defy quantitative measurement. Some policymakers aim to enhance the stigma associated with benefits in order to reduce the number of beneficiaries by motivating them to move out of their stigmatized

condition. In their valuative schema, the higher the stigma, the more desirable a particular policy may be.

In addition to universal criteria, analysts assign policy-specific criteria appropriate to the problem being considered (Haskins, 1980). In analyzing recommended policies regarding the status of young adolescents after school, two policy-specific criteria should be considered: youth development, including intellectual, social, moral, and physical development; and effects on the family, including maternal employment, reduction of family stress, and individual sense of fulfillment. Maternal employment is a two-sided criterion. Policies that provide wholesome opportunities for their young adolescents after school enable women to work with greater ease of mind. Policies that ease the financial burden of after-school program participation may help some mothers stay out of the labor force or work only part time. A highly rated policy alternative creates greater personal choice about full-time employment.

Policy Alternatives

As demonstrated in the previous chapters, numerous policies have been recommended to deal with young adolescents in the after-school hours. Table 1 (p. 71) presents an assessment of seven public policy options based on the valuative criteria identified above. The table should not be construed as a comprehensive assessment of the array of possible initiatives. Rather, it rates selected forms of intervention in order to stimulate further discussion and analysis of potential public initiatives.

Maintain the Status Quo

The status quo receives mixed marks for vertical equity. As we have seen, middle-class parents of young adolescents appear to be more complacent about self-care than lower-class parents, who are more likely to avail themselves of publicly-funded after-school programs. At the same time, middle-class parents can purchase private lessons and can afford the increased fees of programs that have lost public support. Thus, we are in danger of extending rather than reducing a two-track after-school environment that is determined by parental income, one track publicly supported for children of the poor and the other privately supported for children of the middle class. The criterion of vertical equity would indicate the need for direct or indirect supports for parents who cannot afford after-school care for their early adolescent children. The criterion of horizontal equity would indicate the need for a broader array of choices for all parents of the age group. In either event, the status quo is at best rated as only low to moderately desirable based on these two criteria.

Because we lack adequate, disaggregated data on numbers served, costs of particular interventions, and outcomes, there is no way of reasonably determining a benefit-cost ratio for this policy alternative. Thus, no rating is given in Table 1 for the efficiency of this or any other option described below.

Table 1
Assessment of Alternative After-School Policies Based on Eight Valuative Criteria

Policy Alternative	Valuative Criteria: *Universal* — Vertical Equity	Horizontal Equity	Efficiency	Preference Satisfaction	Stigma	Feasibility	*Policy-Specific* — Youth Development	Family Impact
1. Status Quo	Low	Low to moderate	Not rated	Low	Low to moderate	High	Low to moderate	Low to moderate
2. Comprehensive Child Care/Youth Development	High	Moderate	Not rated	High	Moderate	Low	High	High
3. Public Awareness Campaigns	Low	High	Not Rated	Low to moderate	Moderate	High	Low	Low
4. State-Level Start-Up Funds	Low	High	Not Rated	Moderate	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
5. Transportation Subsidy	Moderate	Moderate	Not Rated	High	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
6. Community Service Programs	Low	High	Not Rated	High	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
7. School Drop-out Prevention/Pre-Employment Funding	High	Low	Not Rated	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate

Preference satisfaction in the status quo receives a low rating in the table. Working-class parents are worried; their children are sometimes frightened and bored. The status quo restricts the preference satisfaction of poorer families. It also may lead to greater complacency among the middle class: as greater numbers of young adolescents are in self-care, self-care becomes an acceptable norm. The lack of information about alternatives to self-care, combined with the inaccessibility and the unavailability of programs, reduces parental choice. Likewise, the preference satisfaction of young adolescents is similarly restricted.

Some programs for young adolescents from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m., whatever their funding sources, make sensitive efforts to diversify the population of participants and thereby avoid stigma. Even if a funding stream stipulates that the program prevent substance abuse, which could lead to considerable stigmatizing of the participants, the population served may be broad and the approach preventive. For these reasons, stigma ranks "low to moderate" in the status quo, thus receiving a rather positive grade.

Maintaining the status quo requires continued categorical funding tucked into pockets of legislation and regulations. So long as negative statistical indicators about the youth population do not rise, the status quo is a highly feasible policy option.

This report has reviewed in detail the status quo as it promotes or fails to promote youth development and positive effects on the family. Although we lack evidence that self-care causes serious, widespread harm to young adolescents, we can support the assertion that some young people are apparently more vulnerable than others to certain types of risk and that some benefit from after-school programs geared to reducing risk. Moreover, this report has argued that opportunities for positive experiences promoting intellectual, social, moral, and physical development are being lost to the boredom and aimlessness of self-care. The surveys reviewed suggest that self-care may lower or fail to increase young adolescents' sense of accomplishment.

We also lack evidence that widespread harm to families results from decisions made about self-care. Statistics do not indicate that the status quo either expands or limits choices about maternal employment. Surveys of working mothers, however, indicate that they experience worry, stress, and confusion about their young adolescents in self-care. Whether the status quo promotes or reduces parents' sense of fulfillment has not been ascertained.

The policy-specific criteria for this option thus receive a ranking of "low to moderate," based on the best available but still incomplete evidence.

Support Comprehensive Programs for Child Care and Youth Development

The Comprehensive Child Development Bill of 1971, passed by Congress and vetoed by President Nixon, would have released funds to localities for comprehensive day-care, child-care, and youth development programs up to age 15, with special emphasis on economically disadvantaged children, the children of

working mothers and single parents, and pre-school children. Thus, both vertical and horizontal equity receive positive rankings in Table 1. Under such a policy, community groups would be empowered to assess local needs and establish priorities for comprehensive child development programs, thereby enhancing parental preference satisfaction (rated "high" in the table). The degree of stigma (rated "moderate" in the table) would be determined at the local level by the nature of the program adopted.

At present, a funded program of this order is considered politically unfeasible at the national level. This makes the table's high rankings for the policy-specific criteria (youth development and family impact) irrelevant, at least for the moment. Nonetheless, a comprehensive policy is not totally out of reach. California's vetoed latchkey legislation was passed by both houses, indicating feasibility at the state level.

The status quo and a comprehensive youth development policy that is part of a continuum of child-care services are two ends of a spectrum of policy options. Based on the dichotomies of Rein and Miller, cited at the outset of this chapter, the status quo seeks no reform; a comprehensive policy seeks fundamental reform. The status quo is governed by no discernible pattern of principles determining the distribution of services; a comprehensive policy is governed by both universal and selective principles. The status quo is relatively indifferent to equality of opportunity and equality of conditions; a comprehensive policy is sensitive to both, particularly the former. The status quo is determined by a market system that fails to supply care or involvement for young adolescents; a comprehensive policy with flexibility at the local level combines the centralization of federally or state-determined regulations and the decentralization of pluralistic local decision making.

Support Public Awareness Campaigns

Parents lack information about available resources. Many also are unaware of both the potential negative effects and lost positive opportunities of self-care. Thus, publicly supported information campaigns to build public awareness and provide information and referral services are often recommended as a prerequisite to any other option adopted (Center for Early Adolescence, 1984).

In and of itself, awareness does little for youth development and family choices related to maternal employment; it is therefore ranked "low" based on the policy-specific criteria in Table 1. Likewise, public awareness campaigns cannot reduce social inequities that result from unequal distribution of resources, accounting for the low ranking of vertical equity in the table. Horizontal equity, on the other hand, is rated "high" since many people can have access to information, assuming the public awareness campaign is conducted vigorously and extensively.

Because caution must be exercised to avoid stigmatizing "latchkey" children, single-parent families, and children of working mothers, this option is given a "moderate" ranking in the category. Preference satisfaction is rated "low to moderate" because information helps people make choices, but their choices are restricted by the availability, accessibility, and affordability of programs.

Public awareness is necessary but insufficient to increase after-school options for young adolescents and their families. A chicken-egg problem results, since referrals cannot be made to programs that are not in place, but programs for the age group will multiply and gain greater stability as parents and adolescents become aware of their availability. Public awareness campaigns, while highly feasible, will be pointless if not part of a broader effort.

Provide Start-Up Funds at the State Level

A fourth option is a series of statewide initiatives, like those of New York, offering small sums to establish after-school programs. Regulations would have to stipulate that the early adolescent age group be included. Without such regulations or a required set-aside, communities may continue to overlook youth development and family needs and benefits regarding children beyond the sixth grade. The low cost of this legislation makes it politically more feasible than a comprehensive policy; at the same time, the low cost forces programs into a fee structure that may exclude poorer families, since no operational funds are provided to subsidize a sliding fee scale. In Table 1, therefore, this alternative is assigned a "low" ranking for vertical equity but a "high" ranking for horizontal equity.

Because the statewide initiatives are not restricted to funding programs that redress perceived social pathology, such as substance abuse, premature pregnancy, and school dropout rates, no stigma results at present from this policy approach.

Based on its limited scope, this policy is given "moderate" ratings for preference satisfaction, youth development, and family impact. It might, however, break the chicken-egg cycle by stimulating the establishment of a modest number of programs. Also, since legislation in and of itself is a form of consciousness-raising, parents might become more aware of the need for and availability of alternatives to self-care.

Provide a Transportation Subsidy

Lack of transportation is cited in almost every study of barriers to after-school care and programming, indicating the potentially powerful impact of a policy that subsidizes or supports the cost of transportation to and from programs. Transportation brings within closer reach programs that are inaccessible because of concerns for safety or cost. Funding for transportation enables programs to serve more populations of young people. It allows participants and their parents to choose from among existing programs that are not within walking distance. Thus, Table 1 shows rankings of "moderate" for vertical and horizontal equity and "high" for preference satisfaction.

Legislation can subsidize the cost of bus passes for public transportation, contribute transportation dollars to school systems to stimulate busing to after-school programs, and/or provide funds directly to programs for the purchase of vans or for the distribution of vouchers to provide transportation to a group of programs. All of these approaches would enhance preference satisfaction and reduce stigma (in the table ranked "high" and "low," respectively).

Easing the mobility problem does not create programs. On the other hand, it may make the economic climate more conducive to the survival of existing programs and reduce the barriers to starting new efforts, therefore helping youth workers to meet youth development, and indirectly, family needs.

Support Community Service Programs

As noted in Chapter 4, participants at the conference, "Setting Policy for Young Adolescents in the After-School Hours" (Center for Early Adolescence, 1984), endorsed reframing the after-school issue in terms of service young adolescents can contribute to their community (see also National Crime Prevention Council, 1985). Such an option is moderately feasible, because seed money to establish youth participation programs focusing on the early adolescent age group can be legislated using already existing categorical funds allocated specifically for community service projects. To overcome feasibility problems that inhere in large-scale programs, small-scale demonstration projects could be established, either at the federal or state level, in a limited number of locations.

The concept of community service in restitution programs is not new to some states. But at present, the stigma of such programs is high. Extending legislation beyond the area of juvenile delinquency, to broaden eligibility and avoid stigma, would require crossing categories of preventive legislation (e.g., pregnancy prevention, crime prevention, substance abuse prevention, suicide prevention). If this were done, the stigmatizing effects of community service programs would be substantially reduced or eliminated.

Reducing stigma by opening community service programs to a more universal clientele could result in diminished vertical equity (therefore rated "low") and increased horizontal equity (therefore rated "high").

Some analysts might consider the preference satisfaction for this option to be low, as a singular emphasis on community service limits the range of after-school opportunities. In fact, community service projects are highly popular among young adolescents and their parents and therefore are ranked "high" under preference satisfaction in Table 1. Given their popularity but the limitations of their emphasis, they are ranked "moderate" on the policy-specific criteria.

Support School Dropout Prevention and Pre-Employment Programs

After-school programs can be seen as supplementing and expanding the efforts of school systems. Some parents are uninterested in programs that fail to provide academic and cultural enrichment for their children, whom they see failing in and being failed by schools. The insistence on educational components in after-school programs may be especially strong in Hispanic and black communities (Center for Early Adolescence, 1984). At present, however, the potential linkages between school and after-school programs for early adolescents--beyond the use of school buildings--are virtually unexplored.

It has been recommended that funds be given to after-school programs for school dropout prevention and pre-employment projects, to be held either at the program site or in collaboration with schools. This funding can flow through an extension to the Human Services Reauthorization Act (see Chapter 3) or through dropout prevention legislation. Such a policy would produce some degree of parental preference satisfaction and promote the intellectual and social development of the youths involved. It is reasonable to assume that this option could be implemented if it were tied to current funding efforts. In Table 1, a "moderate" ranking is given for preference satisfaction, stigma, feasibility, youth development, and family impact.

This alternative may appear to reflect the status quo. Some after-school programs already tap sources of public funding to provide basic skills training and preparation for employment. The effort required to patch the funds together can be herculean. Budgetary insecurity from year to year hinders small programs from fishing in the treacherous waters of these funding streams. What is suggested here is a stabilized source of funding earmarked for educational services to prevent school dropouts and encourage employment opportunities targeted to early adolescents, with sliding scales underwritten by public funds to enhance vertical equity, which shows a "high" rating in the table. Conversely, this policy alternative receives a "low" rating for horizontal equity.

* * * * * *

While the options assessed above do not represent all the possible public policy alternatives, they present an array of options that provoke several observations about the 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. issue:

1. Our inability to make reasoned judgments about the comparative efficiency of various policy alternatives results from the lack of fundamental data about the cost and impact on families and adolescents of current and past youth policies.

2. Returning to the dichotomies of Rein and Miller, feasible policies regarding the 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. issue are created incrementally, are selective rather than universal, are directed toward equality of opportunity rather than equality of conditions, and interweave centralized decision making and consumer choice.

3. A broad variety of alternatives enhances the preference satisfaction of both parents and their early adolescent children. Only the status quo remains a restrictive policy alternative on this dimension--because of the paucity of after-school options in most communities, their inaccessibility for some, and their prohibitive cost for many.

4. Most of the policy alternatives can be structured to promote vertical equity. Start-up funds could be given only to programs with sliding fee scales; subsidies of community service programs or transportation could be based in part on the financial need of the participants. Such stipulations might reduce the feasibility of these options, since decisions about vertical equity are highly value-laden and political. A more universal policy may be more enduring because it is less politically vulnerable. A more restrictive program may be more feasible initially and, if it survives, may expand to become more inclusive. The equity

rankings in Table 1 are based on current policy initiatives or recommendations. They can shift as public priorities shift.

5. Stigma is not a serious problem in any of the alternatives presented. "Latchkey child" is no longer necessarily a negative label. Advocates may choose to make it so, through media campaigns that heighten fear and guilt, in order to promote more programs for the age group. The inclusion of middle-class families in the programs, however, offsets much of the stigmatizing effect.

6. Feasible policy options, with the exception of public awareness campaigns, are ranked in the moderate range on the policy-specific criteria. After-school programs are not panaceas. Their impact on family stress, personal fulfillment, and maternal employment is probably marginal. Also, the review of program outcomes in Chapter 2 suggests that we proceed with caution in making claims that after-school programs have powerful effects on the intellectual, social, moral, or physical development of young adolescents--not because the programs are ineffective or lead to negative outcomes, but because we lack adequate outcome data to make a strong case for positive effects.

7. The policy alternatives described in this chapter have the potential to improve the status of young adolescents, their families, and their communities. We do not lack ideas. We lack information, awareness, and social consensus. At the least, we can begin by taking two important steps. First, we must improve the quality of data on the effects of self-care on children and youth, the extensiveness of self-care by age and location, and the effects of various after-school initiatives on youth development. Second, we can target federal and state funding for small-scale efforts, tested locally, to establish a variety of models of after-school programs for young adolescents. Given the diversity of young people and the contexts in which they are reared, a uniform policy is ill-advised. Rather, grant programs should promote local control through broadly representative planning and monitoring boards which are sensitive to the problems and preferences of groups of families in particular neighborhoods. If data gathering and reporting were a requirement of the grants, the two actions recommended here could begin to be addressed simultaneously.

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In "The Place of Values in the World of Psychology and Public Policy," Dokecki (1983) cites Sir Geoffrey Vickers:

> The sole aim and justification of policy-making is to impose on the flux of events some pattern more desirable or less repugnant than it would otherwise take. thus all policy-making assumes that the policy-maker possesses or can evolve standards by which to judge the desirable and repugnant; assumes in other words, that he is able to value.

Dokecki adds, "Values are ongoing, developmental, and transactional *social relations* within the context of the flux of the social order." (pp. 110-12)

In this exploration of the status of young adolescents after school, an attempt has been made to review the "flux of events" and to impose some order on them.

The gaps in the pattern are apparent; we know too little to be dogmatic. Only through continued and increasingly informed exploration and action can we clarify the values we hold about our common responsibilities for rearing youth. Only through such clarification will we select policies with reason and vision.

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